

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

i

**Teachers' Perceptions of Underachievement among Academically Gifted Students at  
one School in East Kazakhstan Region**

Anastasiya Barkova

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

In

Educational Leadership: Inclusive Education

Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education

June, 2019

Word Count: 19,838

### AUTHORS AGREEMENT

By signing and submitting this license, I Anastassiya Barkova (the author or copyright owner) grant to Nazarbayev University (NU) the non-exclusive right to reproduce, convert (as defined below), and/or distribute my submission (including the abstract) worldwide in print and electronic format and in any medium, including but not limited to audio or video.

I agree that NU may, without changing the content, convert the submission to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation.

I also agree that NU may keep more than one copy of this submission for purposes of security, back-up and preservation.

I confirm that the submission is my original work, and that I have the right to grant the rights contained in this license. I also confirm that my submission does not, to the best of my knowledge, infringe upon anyone's copyright.

If the submission contains material for which I do not hold copyright, I confirm that I have obtained the unrestricted permission of the copyright owner to grant NU the rights required by this license, and that such third-party owned material is clearly identified and acknowledged within the text or content of the submission.

IF THE SUBMISSION IS BASED UPON WORK THAT HAS BEEN SPONSORED OR SUPPORTED BY AN AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION OTHER THAN NU, I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE FULFILLED ANY RIGHT OF REVIEW OR OTHER OBLIGATIONS REQUIRED BY SUCH CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT.

NU will clearly identify my name(s) as the author(s) or owner(s) of the submission, and will not make any alteration, other than as allowed by this license, to your submission.

I hereby accept the terms of the above Author Agreement.

Anastassiya Barkova  
Author's signature: *Barkova*

Date: *25/06/2019*

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

iii

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge it contains no materials previously published or written by another person, or substantial proportions of material which have been submitted for the award of any other course or degree at NU or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. This thesis is the result of my own independent work, except where otherwise stated, and the views expressed here are my own.

Signed:   
Date: 25/06/2019

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

iv

**NUGSE Research Approval**

Dear Anastasiya

The NUGSE Research Committee reviewed your study proposal and decided:

To grant approval for this study

**Approval:** This approval is effective for the life of the study. However, any time you change any aspect of your project (e.g., recruitment process, administering materials, collecting data, gaining consent, and changing participants) you will need to submit a request for modification to the NUGSE Research Committee. Make sure to address all of the information requested on the request for modification form(s). Please be advised that in some circumstances, changes to the protocol may disqualify the project from approval.

Sincerely,

NUGSE Research Committee

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

v

**CITI Training Certificate**



The certificate is a white rectangular document with a dark grey border. At the top left is the CITI PROGRAM logo, which consists of a blue globe icon and the text 'CITI PROGRAM'. To the right of the logo is a grey silhouette of a world map. In the top right corner, there is a table with three rows: 'Completion Date' with the value '05-Jun-2018', 'Expiration Date' with '04-Jun-2021', and 'Record ID' with '27363400'. Below the map, the text reads 'This is to certify that: Anastassiya Barkova Has completed the following CITI Program course: Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Curriculum Group) Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Course Learner Group) 1 - Basic Course (Stage) Under requirements set by: Nazarbayev University'. At the bottom right, there is a large 'CITI' logo and the text 'Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative'. At the very bottom, a verification URL is provided: 'Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w2562632d-da6c-466d-8170-4df4655072aa-27363400'.

**CITI PROGRAM**

Completion Date 05-Jun-2018  
Expiration Date 04-Jun-2021  
Record ID 27363400

This is to certify that:

**Anastassiya Barkova**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher** (Curriculum Group)  
**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher** (Course Learner Group)  
**1 - Basic Course** (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Nazarbayev University**

**CITI**  
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at [www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w2562632d-da6c-466d-8170-4df4655072aa-27363400](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w2562632d-da6c-466d-8170-4df4655072aa-27363400)

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

vi

**Abstract**

Even though gifted underachievers can be found in every school, this phenomenon still has not been scrutinized in Kazakhstan. The gifted students might not be provided with required conditions and teaching because of lack of understanding or inappropriate perceptions of the underachievement. Thus, this study aimed to explore teachers' understanding and perceptions of the phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted students, and teachers' beliefs how the issues of underachievement can be improved at one school in East Kazakhstan Region. A qualitative case study was conducted at a school for gifted students in East Kazakhstan Region. The semi-structured interview involved 11 teachers of different subjects and was used to collect the data for analysis. The findings of the study demonstrate that respondents have a shared understanding of the term underachievement. It was defined that gifted underachiever is a student with high intellectual capacity in one domain; at the same time, s/he has also challenges in academic performance in one or several subjects. The finding shows that teachers utilize an observation tool due to identify gifted underachiever and factors contributing to academic failure. Moreover, it was determined that three main factors contribute to underachievement: (1) individual factors such as motivation, self-regulation, and goal orientation; (2) school-related factors that include inconsistency between the school curriculum and the academic needs of gifted students, teacher instruction, and peer relationships; (3) family factors are parental involvement and divorce. Findings revealed that teachers have positive attitudes towards gifted underachievers and believe that pedagogical approaches as differentiation and individual support might improve underachievement among gifted students at school. The study discusses the limitations, implications, and recommendations for further investigation.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

vii

*Keywords:* gifted students, underachievement, factors contributing  
underachievement, attitude, teaching strategies, Kazakhstan

### Абстракт

Үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушылар әр мектепте табылса да, бұл құбылыс әлі күнге дейін Қазақстанда толық зерттелмеген. Академиялық үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушыларды дұрыс түсінбеу немесе дұрыс қабылдамау себебінен оларға қажетті жағдай жасалмауы және тиісті деңгейде білім берілмеуі мүмкін. Осылайша, бұл зерттеу мұғалімдердің дарынды оқушылар арасында академиялық қабілетсіздіктің феноменін түсінуі мен қабылдауын және мұғалімдердің Шығыс Қазақстан обласы мектептерінің бірінде академиялық қабілетсіздіктің проблемаларын шешу жолдары туралы ұстамдарын зерттеуге бағытталған. Сапалы зерттеу, кейс стади, Шығыс Қазақстан облысындағы дарынды балаларға арналған мектепте жүргізілді. Сұхбатқа 11 мұғалім қатысты. Зерттеудің нәтижесі респонденттердің оқудағы үлгермеушілік термині жайлы жалпы түсінкітері бар екендігін көрсетті. Академиялық үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушы – бұл бір салада жоғары интеллектуалдық қабілеті бар оқушы екендігі анықталды; бірақ сонымен қатар бір немесе бірнеше пәндерден академиялық қиындықтары бар. Мұғалімдер академиялық үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушыларды анықтау құралы ретінде бақылауды пайдаланады. Сонымен қатар, академиялық үлгермеушілікке әсер ететін үш негізгі фактор анықталды; (1) мотивация, өзін-өзі реттеу және мақсаттылық сияқты жеке факторлар; (2) мектептің оқу бағдарламалары мен дарынды оқушылардың академиялық қажеттіліктері арасындағы айырмашылықты, мұғалімдердің сабақ беруі мен оқушылардың өзара қарым-қатынастарын қамтитын мектеп факторлары; (3) отбасылық факторларға ата-ананың оқу үдірісіне қатысуы және ата-аналардың ажырасуы кіреді. Зерттеу нәтижелері мұғалімдердің дарынды оқушыларға оң көзқарасы бар екенін және дифференциация мен жеке қолдау сияқты педагогикалық тәсілдер дарынды

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

ix

оқушылардың мектептегі үлгерімін жақсарту алады деп санайтынын көрсетті. Зерттеу барысында зерттеудің кемшіліктері, оның практикалық маңызы және одан әрі зерттеуге арналған ұсынымдар қарастырылады.

*Кілт сөздер:* дарынды оқушылар, академиялық қабілетсіздік, фактор, қатынас, педагогикалық стратегиялар, Қазақстан

### Абстракт

Не смотря на то, что одаренных учеников с низкой успеваемостью можно найти в каждой школе, это явление еще хорошо не изучено в Казахстане. Одаренным ученикам могут не создаваться необходимые условия и не предоставлять соответствующий уровень преподавания из-за отсутствия правильного понимания или восприятия феномена одарённых неуспевающих учеников. Таким образом, данное исследование было направлено на изучение понимания и восприятия учителями явления неуспеваемости среди одаренных учеников, а также убеждений учителей в том, как можно решить проблемы неуспеваемости в одной из школ Восточно-Казахстанской области. Качественное исследование, кейс стади, проводилось в школе для одаренных учеников в Восточно-Казахстанской области. В интервью приняли участие одиннадцать учителей. Результаты исследования показали, что учителя имеют общее понимание термина неуспеваемость. Было определено, что одаренный ученик с низкой успеваемостью - это ученик с высокими интеллектуальными способностями в одной области; в то же время испытывающий академические трудности по одному или нескольким предметам. Учителя используют свои наблюдения в качестве инструмента для выявления одаренных учеников с низкой успеваемостью. Кроме того, были выявлены три основных фактора, влияющих на неуспеваемость: (1) индивидуальные факторы, такие как мотивация, саморегуляция и целенаправленность; (2) факторы, связанные со школой, которые включают несоответствие школьной программы и академическими потребностями одаренных учеников, преподавания учителя и отношения со сверстниками; (3) семейные факторы включают в себя вовлеченность родителей и влияние развода. Результаты

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

xi

показывают, что учителя положительно относятся к одаренным ученикам и считают, что такие педагогические подходы, как дифференциация и индивидуальная поддержка, могут улучшить успеваемость одаренных учеников в школе. В данном исследовании обсуждаются недостатки исследования, его практическое значение и рекомендации для дальнейшего изучения феномена низкой успеваемости среди одаренных учеников.

*Ключевые слова:* одаренные дети, неуспеваемость, факторы, влияющие на неуспеваемость, отношение, педагогические стратегии, Казахстан.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

xii

**Table of Contents**

List of Tables .....	xvi
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1. Introduction .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Purpose of the Study .....	6
1.4 Research Questions .....	7
1.5 Significance of the study.....	7
1.6 Outline .....	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Definitions of Giftedness .....	10
2.3 Gifted underachievers .....	14
2.3.1 Discrepancy Between Potential and Performance .....	14
2.3.2 Discrepancy Between Predicted and Actual Achievements .....	15
2.3.3 Promotion and Using Talent Potential .....	16
2.4 Identification of gifted underachievers .....	17
2.5 Factors Influencing Gifted Underachievement.....	19
2.5.1 Individual Factors.....	19

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

xiii

2.5.2 School-Related Factors .....	24
2.5.3 Family Factors.....	27
2.6 Influence of Teachers' Attitudes on the Academic Achievements.....	29
2.7 Reversing Underachievement .....	30
2.8 Conceptual Framework.....	34
2.9 Conclusion .....	35
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	36
3.1 Introduction.....	36
3.2 Research Design and rationale.....	36
3.3 Research Site.....	37
3.4 Sample and sampling procedures .....	37
3.5 Data collection instruments .....	39
3.6 Data collection procedures.....	40
3.7 Data analysis methods .....	40
3.8 Ethical Concerns and Risks of Research .....	42
3.9 Conclusion .....	43
Chapter 4: Findings .....	44
4.1 Introduction.....	44
4.2 Teachers' understanding of the term underachievement among academically gifted students and factors influencing it. ....	44

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

xiv

4.2.1 Factors contributing to gifted underachievement.....	46
4.3 Teachers' attitude towards underachievement among academically gifted students	55
4.3.1 Positive attitude.....	56
4.3.2. Negative attitude .....	57
4.4 Strategies teachers believe are useful to improve underachievement among gifted students .....	59
4.4.1 Personal experience.....	59
4.4.2 International experience .....	60
4.5 Conclusion .....	61
Chapter V: Discussion.....	63
5.1 Introduction.....	63
5.2 Understanding of the term underachievement among academically gifted students	63
5.3 Factors affecting gifted students' underachievement .....	64
5.4 Teachers' attitudes towards gifted underachievers .....	68
5.5 Strategies to improve underachievement among gifted students.....	69
5.6 Conclusion .....	71
Chapter VI: Conclusion.....	72
6.1 Introduction.....	72
6.2 Summary of the study .....	72

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

xv

6.3 Limitations and future research directions.....	73
6.4 Implications and Recommendations .....	74
References .....	76
Appendices .....	87

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

xvi

**List of Tables**

*Table 1.* Participants' characteristics..... 38

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Recently the role of education in the Republic of Kazakhstan has been strengthened as a consequence of growing competition in the global market and the desire to be in the top tier of developed countries in both the economic and cultural spheres. Thus, the government has focused its attention on the development of education, especially providing support for students with special needs including gifted and talented youth (MES RK, 2010). Mostly, this direction in education was chosen because it is believed that gifted and talented students have extraordinary perspectives and ways of problem-solving which will help to move the country forward (Davis & Rimm, 1998; Heuser, Wang & Shahid, 2017; Passow, Mönks, & Heller, 1993; Schultz, 2002). As an initial step, the network of Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools were established, as were boarding and specialized schools for gifted and talented students. The Republican Scientific and Practical Center named «Daryn» was founded to support gifted students by providing specialized programs, trainings and conditions to develop and enhance students' abilities. Moreover, Daryn is focused on enhancing teachers' excellence through the involvement of international experts who might share their experience for future implementation in the local schools (MES RK, 2010).

Even though the phenomenon of giftedness has been studied for a long period of time, there continues to be some perplexing questions relating to the understanding; definition, selecting and applying instruments of student identification; and providing ongoing support to gifted students (Lupart & Pyryt, 1996). For instance, one school might label a child as a gifted student on the basis of its school values, staff perception and

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

2

beliefs, tools, and socio-historical or socio-political features of a country or area where the school is situated; while another school might place the same student within the general population (Davis, Rim & Siegle as cited in Heuser et al., 2017, p. 5). Consequently, it is important to understand the perception of the giftedness held the school staff, to what extent the school is ready to provide a favorable environment, and support for gifted students, and the teachers who work with them.

The history of the investigation the giftedness is not so long, but includes the name of eminent scientists and philosophers who attempted to explain this phenomenon and how to deal with it. Confucius and Plato named gifted children as “heavenly” children (Passow et al., 1993, p. 884) and they paid attention both to their intellectual abilities and possible contribution to the society. Also, according to Asian and European beliefs, the extraordinary mental abilities were considered a “gift from nature” (Passow et al., 1993, p. 884). Further definitions of the giftedness and talent related to their intellect, “inborn ability”, or genius (Passow et al., 1993, p. 884). Therefore, such diversity of definitions, including the beliefs and understanding of the term by people of different nationalities and from different periods of time, give evidence about the existence of the issues concerning understanding and perception of giftedness. It might be concluded that gifted people have been considered as having deep intellectual capacity, who can contribute to developing a talented and progressive community in the future (Callagher, 2005; Schultz, 2002).

Scholars proposed theories and models of giftedness and talent that described the nature of the giftedness and the factors influencing its development and maintenance. When researchers began focusing their attention on the problems relating to giftedness, a new phenomenon of gifted underachievement was identified. However, this phenomenon was not investigated prior to the beginning of the era of behavioral psychology (Bennett-

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

3

Rappell & Northcote, 2016; Schultz, 2002). The most meaningful findings concerning the first recommendations of correcting and improving challenges of gifted students appeared and were introduced in the 1950s. Representatives of behavioral psychology utilized comparative investigations; however this did not reflect the analysis of possible causes and factors affecting underachievement. Despite the research studies, underachievement among gifted students was not widely discussed or recognized throughout the society. Only in 1963 the problems of gifted students became more visible and were further investigated. It was the time when society began to speak about the need of providing education and special conditions for people with additional educational needs including the gifted population. Moreover, the scholars focused on the causes and factors contributing to underachievement and measures of remediation and support (Bennett-Rappell & Northcote, 2016; Schultz, 2002).

Although underachievement among gifted students has been investigated over the years, it is still a confusing and challenging issue for educators, teachers, and parents. The main problem is grounded in the variety of definitions of underachievement among the gifted students that adds to the difficulty in their identification (Baum, Renzulli & Hebert, 1995; Bennett-Rappell & Northcote, 2016). Consequently, there are a number of students who are not involved in gifted education programs and do not receive appropriate services that allow the development of their full potential and talents. As a result, these students might be expelled from the school due to low academic achievements (Bennett-Rappell & Northcote, 2016; Lupart & Pyryt, 1996; Schultz, 2002).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Providing appropriate support and service for gifted students can positively

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

4

influence a high level of development in the scientific, cultural and social aspects of Kazakhstan. (MES RK Republican Center "Preschool Childhood", 2015). Thus, the State Program for Developing Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan 2011-2020 declares the importance of identification and development of the potential and abilities of gifted and talented students as the leading force of a modern education (MES RK, 2010). Based on this, the government established schools and research centers aimed to support gifted students and educational institutions. Nevertheless, it is claimed that there is still a significant number of issues in working effectively with a gifted population (Vostrokolenkova, 2007).

Often students labeled as gifted and talented demonstrate low academic performance and might drop out of school (Hoover-Schultz, 2005; Reis & McCoach, 2000). Research indicates gaps in teaching practice and conditions that might not fully satisfy students' needs as well as the existence of the phenomenon of underachievement among gifted students. The concept of gifted underachievement is not well studied within Kazakhstan and there are no local studies that have investigated this phenomenon. Hence, teachers might be unfamiliar or misunderstand the notion of underachievement among gifted students as a result of a lack of knowledge and practice. Consequently, it leads to an inappropriate organization of the holistic educational process for this group of students (Vostrokolenkova, 2007).

Previous studies on the phenomenon of gifted underachievement have focused on the problems relating to the absence of a universal definition of the central concept (Hoover-Schultz, 2005; Reis and McCoach, 2000). Many investigations pointed out the discrepancy of scores between IQ and standardized tests should not be a single

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

5

identification tool; there is a need for detailed investigation to consider other criteria (Hoover-Schultz, 2005; Gallagher, 2005; Siegle & McCoach, 2010).

Also, Reis and McCoach (2000) reasoned that “The construct of achievement (and, therefore, underachievement) differs from culture to culture, and may be quite different from that of the dominant culture” (as cited in Gallagher, 2005). Additionally, researchers investigated factors contributing to underachievement (Dowdall & Collangelo, 1982; Hoover-Schultz, 2005; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Renzulli, 1982). The findings demonstrated that individual, family and school-related factors are most influential on the academic achievements of students of various ages including gender and age-sensitivity (Blaas, 2014; Gagne, 2007; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Tsai & Fu, 2016). Consequently, the process of identification should be multi-dimensional including tools, individual factors, local values and priorities, teachers' beliefs and attitudes in order to identify gifted underachievers (Dowdall & Collangelo, 1982; Hoover-Schultz, 2005; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Renzulli, 1982).

One school in East Kazakhstan Region has been working with gifted and high-ability students for more than eight years providing special conditions for quality education to foster students' intellectual capacity. There are a number of standard procedures targeting the identification of gifted and talented students. These tools include IQ and other standardized testing along with identifying learning styles, ways of perception, and psycho-emotional level of the students. The information collected is reflected upon in the school development plan that is available for the school staff (CIS Report, 2017). These findings are used as a base for selecting appropriate strategies to enhance the teaching and learning process and develop individual plans to work with gifted students.

Whereas while a school in East Kazakhstan region has experience in and support of giftedness, the issue of underachievement has not been studied there (CIS Report, 2017). International studies demonstrate the importance of introducing the term of underachievement to stakeholders who might not be familiar with this phenomenon, in particular this applies to Kazakhstani schools (Hoover-Schultz, 2005; Reis & McCoach, 2000). It helps to explain students' behavior and performance as well as attitude toward school and their learning outcomes. Also, scholars focus attention on the influence of teachers and parents' understanding and attitudes toward gifted children with low academic performance (Gallagher, 2005; Reis & McCoach, 2000). Gallagher (2005) highlighted that "Underachievement is perceived through the eyes of the observer who is influenced by predetermined expectations." (p.2). Consequently, there is a need to consider the definition of underachievement emphasizing cultural and regional features, and core school values that might be based on teachers' expectations and understanding of the central phenomenon and their experience of work with gifted and talented youth (Dowdall & Collangelo, 1982; Hoover-Schultz, 2005; Lupart & Pyryt, 1996).

Investigating the understanding of the central phenomenon through qualitative research helps to uncover teachers' understanding and attitude toward gifted underachievement, as well as factors influencing underachievement and strategies that teachers use to work with gifted underachievement. The administration and teachers will be able to determine to what extent the school works to provide appropriate conditions and service to satisfy gifted students' needs in order to eliminate underachievement.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to explore teachers' understanding and perceptions of

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

7

the phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted students, and teachers' beliefs of how the issues of underachievement can be improved in one school in East Kazakhstan Region.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The research questions of the study are:

Q1. What is teachers' understanding of term underachievement among academically gifted students?

Q2. What are the factors affecting gifted students' underachievement from the teachers' perspective?

Q3. What are teachers' attitudes toward gifted underachievers?

Q4. What strategies do teachers believe are useful to improve underachievement among gifted students?

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

There is a dearth of studies in Kazakhstan focused on the phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted students and teachers' understanding and attitude, although gifted students are provided with specialized education (Pons, Amoroso, Herczynski, Kheyfets, Lockheed & Santiago, 2015, p. 97). This research contributes to evaluating teachers' understanding and awareness of the phenomenon and the factors that have an impact on students' academic achievements. Consequently, the findings of the research may contribute to teachers being able to more knowledgeably identify gifted underachievers and provide appropriate academic support as the need arises (Moltzen, 2004).

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

8

Secondly, investigation of the issue in one school of East Kazakhstan region allows school administration and school policy makers to develop special programs, and policies relating to the providing special services and conditions to meet students' needs. It may be beneficial for organizing additional professional development support for school staff involving local or international experts who might share their expertise in working with gifted underachievers, or do some collaborative action research (Gallagher, 2005). Also, the school could develop individual intervention plans and programs to provide additional socio-emotional support for gifted students along with their parents involving specialists and psychologists (Christensen-Needham, 2010; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Ritchotte, Matthews & Flowers, 2016). Consequently, these actions might lead to a decrease in the number of gifted students at risk and may increase active support of their potential through promoting knowledge and skills better suited to their learning needs (Moltzen, 2004).

For the researcher, this study will help deepen understanding of the issues relating to the central phenomenon by analyzing critical and controversial viewpoints of scholars. Also, it offers the opportunity to look at the problem from different perspectives to compare and synthesize the main findings of the studies over a long period of time. As well, studying the relevant literature enables learning about other research and methodology used when studying this topic. Some researchers identify gaps in their studies that can be used as the basis for further investigation

Moreover, for an educator, this study will be beneficial in deepening awareness of specific aspects of the identification process as well as pinpointing factors contributing to underachievement. The researcher will discover new strategies and interventions through analyzing international findings and experience that might eventually be put into practice in the local school.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

9

Ritchotte, Matthews and Flowers said that “Gifted underachievement represents a frustrating loss of potential for society” (as cited in Bennett-Rappell & Northcote, 2016, p. 408). Thus, this study might be a driving force to further investigate issues related to underachievement in order to protect gifted students from being expelled. Then, the school might translate their experience and findings to local schools to provide additional support. It helps Kazakhstani teachers to be aware of the phenomenon. As a result, teachers from state schools, who work with mixed ability students, may be able to select alternative approaches and arrange a suitable environment to meet students' needs.

### **1.6 Outline**

This Master Thesis includes six chapters. This chapter discussed the background information of the study, problem statement that leads to the purpose of the study and research questions, and the significance of the conducting study. The Literature Review chapter introduces the analysis and synthesis of the literature relating to the underachievement in gifted students and the conceptual framework. The Methodology chapter discusses the reason for choosing to conduct a qualitative study, the instruments and procedure of data collection and analysis; and additionally it addresses the ethical aspects. Chapter four discusses the findings which have been organized into four main themes including subthemes. The Discussion chapter presents the discussion of findings relative to the studied literature. The final chapter presents the summary of the study, implications, limitations and recommendations for further study.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter investigated the existing literature concerning teachers' perceptions of underachievement among academically gifted students. The literature review is focused on (a) definitions of the concepts giftedness and underachievement, (b) tools identifying gifted underachievers, (c) factors influencing underachievement, (d) influence of attitudes towards gifted underachievers and (e) strategies for reversing underachievement among gifted students.

Additionally, this chapter examines the international experience of the central phenomenon of the study as there is a lack of research studies conducted in the Kazakhstani context.

### **2.2 Definitions of Giftedness**

Each school applies specific methods and tools to identify giftedness to serve students effectively. Furthermore, schools utilize different measurements to identify the level of needs of gifted students, their motivation and abilities along with how giftedness is nominated by parents, school staff and children. Initially, the main priority of each school serving gifted students is to establish a definition and recognize teachers' attitudes towards giftedness as the term is not universal in its definition and interpretation (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; National Association for Gifted Children website, 2017). Consequently, it is important to be familiar with the history of the research on "giftedness" to realize what theories and models provide the foundation for the concept (Bennett-Rappell, & Northcote, 2016, p. 409). Also, Davis, Rimm and Siegle (2010) confirmed that there are local features that influence the interpretation of the term giftedness such as "socio-historical and socio-

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

11

political realities”, personal and social attitudes and beliefs together with any given school’s core values (as cited in Heuser et al., 2017, p.5).

There are various theories describing giftedness and talent; one of them is Gardner's Theory of Multiple intelligences that focuses on various cognitive abilities, such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual/spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and existential. According to Gardner (1989), multiple intelligences are grounded in both biological and cultural elements. He explained that different parts of the brain are responsible for learning abilities, while culture has an influence on the development and importance placed on these abilities in certain areas (Brualdi, 1996, p.2). Thus, these facts should be considered while identifying children’s abilities and talents as well as the fact that the intelligences cannot exist in isolation (Colangelo & Davis, 2003, p.28). This theory highlights the necessity to transform lessons which include implementation of various approaches and activities to meet the needs of students with different cognitive abilities. Gardner (1989) believed that while traditional paper-and-pencil examinations assess linguistic and logical skills, there should be applied other instruments to evaluate intelligence (p.6).

Another research study discussed the importance of the dichotomy between giftedness and talent; therefore there were attempts to separate and give a clear definition for each of the terms (Gagne, 1985). Gagne (2004) in his study explained two concepts in the following ways:

Giftedness designates the possession and use of untrained and spontaneously expressed superior natural abilities (called aptitudes or gifts), in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of his or her age peers.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

12

Talent designates the superior mastery of systematically developed abilities (or skills) and knowledge in at least one field of human activity to a degree that places an individual within at least the upper 10% of age peers who are or have been active in that field or fields (p.120).

The clear distinction between the two concepts allows for organizing appropriate support and implementing interventions and programs to maintain abilities among a gifted population.

Then Gagne (2004) used these definitions in the Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT). This model demonstrates the close relationship among six components such as giftedness (natural abilities), talent (systematically developed skills), the developmental process, intrapersonal and environmental catalysts that have an influence on promoting and supporting abilities and skills, and provides opportunity for the development of giftedness and talent influenced by catalysts (p. 121). The natural abilities that can be observed in studying or practicing are intellectual, creative, socio-affective, and sensorimotor (Gagne, 2004). It is very important for these abilities to be identified at an early age in school through observation of the way and speed young children carry out activities. In order to develop natural abilities and transfer them into talent, it is necessary to continue to learn and practice systematically. In turn, intrapersonal catalysts such as physical and psychological features and environmental factors such as people, and events influence the development of talent or giftedness (Gagne, 2004). This model helps in identifying the problem in teaching gifted and talented students, such as determining the inner and outer factors that influence the maintenance and promotion of the abilities and talents as well as in eliminating the factors contributing to the phenomenon of underachievement among students.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

13

Extending Gagne's definitions, Freeman (2002) added that the intellectual aspects of development are more easily measured as gifts in comparison with talent that is usually defined only by experts in this field. Differentiation between the two concepts requires further investigation in order to establish a clearer understanding. Only by achieving greater clarity in this regard can student achievement be enriched.

Also, Renzulli and Reis (1985) argue that teachers should observe students' behaviors and abilities rather than testing and examining their intelligence. Renzulli (2014) defined three important factors that influence the giftedness: task commitment, above average ability, and creativity; the interconnection of these three factors establish giftedness. Renzulli's Three Ring Conception Model (TRCM) explains the concept of giftedness and a tangible, potentially practical, multidimensional definition of gifted students, consequently it provides a basis for teachers to select beneficial approaches to teach gifted students and manage their academic achievements.

Gagne's DMGT might be considered as the expansion of TRCM, however, there is one limitation of Renzulli's Model which concerns task completion as a required peculiarity of the gifted student (Page, 2006, p. 13). Renzulli and Renzulli (2010) declared that the unique terms of giftedness and talent are not able to describe these concepts in details. A clear understanding of the term giftedness allows for addressing students' needs and explains the potential benefits and challenges in teaching gifted students.

All in all, it is important to understand the theoretical nature of giftedness selected by an educator to examine the phenomenon and the determination of appropriate tools for identification taking the local context and culture into consideration.

### **2.3 Gifted underachievers**

The issues relating to underachievement in gifted students have been studied over a lengthy period, but there is still no unique definition of the term (Siegle & McCoach, 2009). Siegle and McCoach (2010) in their study classified the definitions of the underachiever into three categories (1) discrepancy between potential and performance, (2) discrepancy between predicted and actual achievements, (3) promotion and using latent potential (p. 153). This division adds to a the deeper understanding of the concept as the researchers argued that the common definition of the term underachievement is too limiting when relating to specific cases of gifted students' underachievement (Baum, Renzulli & Hebert, 1995). Consequently, on the basis of these three categories, the school is able to choose the method of identification and classification of gifted underachievers according to the educational goals, values aligned with each school's concept of giftedness.

#### **2.3.1 Discrepancy Between Potential and Performance**

Some researchers consider underachievement as the discrepancy between potential (student ability) and performance (student achievement) (Davis, at al., 2011; Siegle & McCoach, 2010). For instance, Baum, Renzulli and Hebert (1995, p.11) defined underachievers as “students who demonstrate high ability on a measure of intelligence but fail to perform in school at a level commensurate with their potential.”. In addition, Dowdall and Collangelo (1982) determined discrepancy as the inconsistency between standardized tools to measure students' academic performance such as IQ test and evaluation or exam grades, teachers expectations and student' academic performance during the lesson. Accordingly, the researchers noted that this type of discrepancy is the most frequent one appearing at schools all over the world, however, there are some

controversial issues relating to the identification of gifted students and assessing their academic achievements. It is obvious that in some schools giftedness is identified by an IQ test only, while other schools utilize different tools and multiple criteria. Consequently, in one case a child might be labeled as gifted whereas in another case he could be relegated to the general school population. The second issue relates to the assessment of students' achievements as schools apply various approaches and standardized tests to monitor students' progress as well as observations about the demonstration of abilities and behavior in the learning. Also, some scholars disagree with this discrepancy stating that there should not be a correlation between students' intellectual abilities and academic achievements, as students cannot be considered as academically gifted only because there are various types of giftedness that cannot be assessed by any standardized test (Lupart & Pyryt 1996; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Siegle & McCoach, 2010).

Therefore, the data about gifted underachievers cannot be generalized to make any statistical or global conclusions as each school utilizes different grading approaches and policies, curriculum and tools to evaluate gifted students' potential and performance (Baum et al., 1995; Siegle & McCoach, 2010; Tannenbaum, 1983).

### **2.3.2 Discrepancy Between Predicted and Actual Achievements**

The scholars agreed that the common discrepancy is between students' abilities and expected academic achievements; however, they also highlighted the discrepancy between predicted and actual achievements. McCall, Evahn and Kratzer (1992) in their study found that most of the definitions are focused on the students' expected results of tests. For instance, Redding (1990) in his study stated that underachievement may appear when gifted student does not satisfy predicted high achievements and demonstrate low

academic results. Also, It was emphasized that "If the actual achievement scores fall some distance lower than what was predicted, the student may be labeled an underachiever" (Reis & McCoach, 2000, p. 154). According to these definitions, it might be inferred that it is expected that if the student IQ score is high, consequently the score of any standardized test should be the same. However, it is argued that most attention is paid to the predicted results without considering the factors influencing the students while testing. These factors might be stress, low motivation, problems in the family or at school. Therefore, despite the high abilities of a student, the predicted and actual results might be significantly different (Reis & McCoach, 2000).

### **2.3.3 Promotion and Using Talent Potential**

Rimm (1997) disputed the fact that underachievement is the discrepancy between predicted and actual achievements as various inner and outer factors might affect low results of an IQ or any standardized test. Therefore, he concluded that gifted underachievers cannot be identified by test results only. Additionally, it was suggested to focus on the factors influencing the development and application of abilities and knowledge instead of paying attention to the development of the potential and work habits in order to demonstrate how students' abilities might be promoted and applied to reach high results. He noted that if students do not develop their abilities at school it leads to underachievement (Baum et al., 1995; Rimm, 1997). Consequently, a school should consider the conditions and quality of service and material provided to the students to avoid any mismatches between one's abilities and potential leading to the phenomenon of underachievement.

When comparing different approaches to the interpretation of the phenomenon of underachievement it is necessary to develop a unique definition that allows-researchers to study and communicate about the related issues. Therefore, it is concluded that each school has its own definitions and expectations of gifted underachievement, thus it might be challenging to generalize the findings collected from different educational institutions (Baum et al., 1995; Siegle & McCoach, 2010; Tannenbaum, 1983).

#### **2.4 Identification of gifted underachievers**

There is another controversial issue related to the identification of gifted underachievers. Siegle and McCoach (2010) asserted that the definition of underachievement is the basis for identification of students and creation of criteria for this process. It has been suggested to indicate the discrepancy between potential and students' achievements as assessed by standardized tests (Baum et al., 1995; Dowdall & Colangelo, 1982; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Rimm, 1997; Siegle & McCoach, 2010). However, the student's age, socio-economical background, level of intellectual abilities, problems with health and other features should be considered when choosing the most suitable tools of measurement. Consequently, if the results demonstrate any mismatch between potential and performance, the student would be labeled underachiever.

The researchers argued that gifted students are not able to be labeled underachievers based only on the results of tests;-attention should be focused on the duration of academic failure. If a student has been demonstrating low results over a short period of time, he cannot be labeled as an underachiever. In this case, the factors which might lead to underachievement should be uncovered and addressed. By contrast, if gifted students have a long-lasting mismatch between potential and performance, specific actions

should be taken to support gifted underachievers. Therefore, it was suggested to define the specific criteria that might be influencing academic performance and behavior (Siegle & McCoach, 2010). Consequently, the criteria and results of the tests are considered an integrated tool that measures the phenomenon of underachievement.

Dowdall and Collangelo (1982) emphasized that any observations, perception towards the students' achievements and abilities along with their grades are additional instruments in the identification of underachievers among a gifted population. However, they cannot be applied alone as their results might be biased, due to a negative attitude by teachers toward the student who has problems with behavior. The problems might appear because a student is not interested in the subject or has a different point of view from the teacher. Consequently, the results of teacher observations might lead to a biased conclusion.

Thus, the instrument for identification of underachievers should be multidimensional and consider the local features of the school and culture. According to this, it might be concluded that in the initial stage of the development of the instrument for identification, a clear definition of the term gifted underachiever should include local characteristics. Then, based on a consistent definition, the instruments and appropriate criteria for identification can be created and tested (Passow et al., 1993).

Moreover, some researchers assume that the central phenomenon might be investigated quantitatively and suggested The School Attitude Assessment Survey-Revised (SAAS-R) that measures factors influencing underachievement in secondary school. It explores the relationship of five factors contributing underachievement: attitudes toward school and teachers, goal-valuation, motivation, and academic self-perceptions. The researchers believed that this tool might help in identifying underachievers and

contributing factors (McCoach & Siegle, 2003b; Pérez, Costa, Gilar Corbi & Veas Iniesta, 2016).

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods could possibly investigate the central phenomenon in-depth and provide a clear understanding of underachievement among gifted students. Nevertheless, it needs revision and adaptation including the features and values of the local society.

## **2.5 Factors Influencing Gifted Underachievement**

Research has suggested a myriad of definitions of underachievement but it is equally important to understand the factors and conditions which impact underachievement (Blaas, 2014; Gagne, 2007; Reis & McCoach, 2000). Scholars have characterized gifted underachievers in different ways. For instance, Gagne (2007) in his studies asserted that the level of achievements is strongly related to the level of students' motivation; while other researchers focus their attention on the impact of family conditions, beliefs and attitudes toward education along with school environment including peer relationships and the teacher's attitude (Gagne, 2007; Garn, Matthews & Jolly, 2010). These factors might affect each other and lead to a student losing their interest in studying, so it is necessary to know how this might be recognized and managed.

### **2.5.1 Individual Factors**

There are internal and external factors that have a great impact on academic performance where considerable attention is paid to socio-emotional wellbeing. Researchers believe that socio-emotional wellbeing has a strong impact upon the phenomena of gifted underachievement. For instance, difficulties in the control of feelings might lead to negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, lack of self-regulation as well as

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

20

negative attitudes toward school, education or teachers. Thereby, gifted students, who are at particular risk of becoming underachievers, might lose their confidence or interest in school as well as decrease the level of their academic self-perception (McCoach & Siegle, 2003a; Blaas, 2014) Consequently, students' academic self-perception is an influential factor in academic achievements as it reflects the level of confidence in gifted children about their abilities, potential and the way of performing different activities as well as coping with challenges (McCoach & Siegle, 2003a).

Also, researchers focused on two categories of personal perception: self-efficacy and self-concept and stated that-gifted children usually have a lower level of efficacy and self-concept in contrast with students of the majority group (McCoach & Siegle, 2003a). It was declared that low self-efficacy has a negative influence on the academic achievement of gifted students (Bandura, 1994; Ritchotte, Suhr, Alfurayh & Graefe, 2016, p. 108). This fact is also discussed by other researchers where gifted students with negative beliefs or feelings about their skills had low expectations of their learning thus demonstrating poor performance (Bandura, 1994; Blaas, 2014).

Gifted students evaluate their previous experience of accomplishment in different tasks and activities, the level of their satisfaction, and the reaction or opinion of other students or teachers. As well gifted students prefer comparing and contrasting their results with their peers to assess personal skills (Schunk, as cited in McCoach & Siegle, 2003a). Therefore, when gifted students realize that they can make progress and successfully apply their knowledge and abilities the level of self-efficacy and motivation is increased. Consequently, the capabilities of gifted students in managing their behavior and feelings as well as evaluation of their abilities contribute to their success or failure in learning. Self-concept is important in goal orientation, in defining the students' attitude toward the

educational process and school, in uncovering strategies for studying and other issues relating to motivation that influences overall achievement (Bandura, 1994).

In some cases, the low performance of gifted students relates to the lack of motivation. In order to foster a nurturing environment and satisfy gifted students' needs, it is necessary to identify these students and evaluate the effectiveness of approaches provided (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Ryan and Deci (2000) found the relationship between personal productivity and motivation in Self-Determination Theory. The researchers defined three types of motivation: intrinsic (inner motivation), extrinsic (external motivation such as rewards, prizes, punishment and amotivation).

Different studies determined that intrinsic motivation is the dominant characteristic affecting the academic performance of gifted students (Trevino & DeFreitas, 2014). Thus, intrinsically motivated students show better academic results than extrinsically motivated ones (Vero & Puka, 2017).

The term intrinsic motivation is defined differently although, the general focus is the enjoyment of school learning and carrying out tasks with personal interest and pleasure (Gottfried, Fleming & Gottfried, 2001; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Gottfried's longitudinal study demonstrated the results of the relationship between intrinsic motivation development and academic achievements of students aged 9-17 years. The researcher concluded that (a) early development of intrinsic motivation will positively impact academic performance; and (b) academic success of high school students is determined by the current level of intrinsic motivation, which in the majority of cases cannot be developed in students of this age. Consequently, it is important to start the development of intrinsic motivation from elementary school, as it provides more opportunity to investigate the effectiveness of approaches and strategies applied by the teacher and in some cases design individual plans

for gifted students (Gottfried et al., 2001). When students' needs are fully satisfied it helps students to realize and feel internal satisfaction that leads to self-determination and high self-esteem.

Also, Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (2000) highlights the importance of satisfying three basic needs: (1) autonomy, when students might manage their actions during-task performance by themselves, (2) competence, students acquire and master their knowledge through the communication and collaboration with peers, (3) relatedness, students feel like a part of the educational process. Responding to the basic needs allows for developing the environment in which students will be able to promote their abilities and achieve high results.

Self-regulation is one more key factor contributing to academic success among gifted students. Zimmerman (1990) stated "Self-regulated learners are aware of when they know a fact or possess a skill and when they do not. Unlike their passive classmates, self-regulated students proactively seek out information when needed and take the necessary steps to master it." (p.4). In this respect, self-regulated gifted students realize their learning as an organized process where they are able to set goals, select approaches to acquire knowledge and analyze their actions to evaluate their progress. Therefore, Zimmerman (1990) defined students as "metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning" (p. 4). Consequently, such students rarely become underachievers as they are able to organize their process of learning in a beneficial way.

Despite the fact that gifted students self-regulate their learning, unexpected negative results might affect their motivation and further academic performance. It happens because gifted students have higher expectations of their performance (Roberts & Lovett, 1994). This phenomenon is called perfectionism which is mostly related to gifted

students. It has been found that perfectionism is a cause of “underachievement and emotional turmoil” (Adderholdt-Elliott, as cited in Wang et al., 2012, p. 97).

The researchers categorized perfectionism into two groups: neurotic or maladaptive (unhealthy) perfectionism, which induces anxiety, fear of failure, low self-esteem and motivation, dissatisfaction, and adaptive (healthy) perfectionism, when students tend to improve and develop their areas of weakness, analyze reasons for failures and eliminate them; enjoy their learning, and set realistic goals and objectives (Burdick, 2017; Mofield & Chakraborti-Ghosh, 2010; Schuler, 2000; Wang et al., 2012).

Schuler (2000) in her mixed-method study explored perfectionism among 112 gifted adolescents in a rural school. The study revealed that totally 87.5% of gifted students are perfectionists, however while 58% of the students had normal levels of perfectionism, 29.5% of the students had maladaptive perfectionism. The researcher noted that according to the collected data the adaptive perfectionists had demonstrated their organization and desire to work hard in order to achieve goals and succeed from childhood. In contrast, maladaptive perfectionists always felt anxiety, worried about their results, reaching their expectations, and the opinion of others. However, both categories of students mentioned that perfectionism positively influenced their performance. Consequently, it is necessary to monitor how perfectionism impacts gifted students in the classroom. This will help to support gifted students with maladaptive perfectionism, mitigate negative effects and develop a positive influence of perfectionism on their academic performance (Burdick, 2017; Mofield & Chakraborti-Ghosh, 2010; Schüler, 2000; Wang et al., 2012).

Speirs Neumeister, Williams, Cross and Shewmaker (2009) declared that family and environmental factors are the basis for the development of perfectionism. One reason is the lack or absence of attention or parental approval making children unable to establish

realistic goals or select appropriate ways to achieve them. Thus, negative experience affects their self-estimation and motivation, when students try to achieve success and are unsuccessful. In addition, children imitate parents' perfectionist manner of conducting themselves which is the base for the establishment of their own behavior (Burdick, 2017). Therefore, parents and teachers' awareness about perfectionism allows for better supporting the work for gifted students and preventing the development of underachievement.

One of the vital issues related to the setting of goals and selection of approaches to achieve them is goal valuation. According to Wigfield (1994) the student might reach success and high results if he is able to evaluate the significance of the goal orientation and task completion because it allows for becoming involved in the work where he is able to make every effort to cope with the task on a high level (as cited in McCoach & Siegle, 2003b). Therefore, students need to know how to establish and evaluate goals that in turn motivate, increase their level of self-perception.

When analyzing individual factors, it is apparent that in some cases one factor influences academic failure, while in other cases academic failure is the result of a combination or several factors. Thus, every case needs additional investigation as it is challenging to identify the general roots of the underachievement as students have different personalities, so levels of self-perception and motivation might be affected by different external factors.

### **2.5.2 School-Related Factors**

After family, the next factor influencing students' academic achievement is the school. The school environment might enrich, develop or maintain the abilities of any

student; consequently, the educational process should be organized in such an effective way as to support students, meet their needs, promote abilities and talents, provide extra-curricular activities, and include any interventions in the curriculum as needed (Baker, Bridger & Evans, 1998).

One of the main factors impacting students' achievement is the inconsistency between the school curriculum and the academic needs of gifted students. If students are not challenged in the provided tasks, topics and activities, this might impede the development of their abilities and involvement in the educational process; which does not meet students' requirements or suit their level of intelligence. Rise (1998) defined this phenomenon as "dropping out of dignity" and drew attention to the findings of a four-year longitudinal study which demonstrated that underachievement among elementary and middle school students as a result of the inappropriate curriculum continued in high school (as cited in Siegle & McCoach, 2010, p. 156). Thus, the curriculum should be motivating, challenging and correspond to students' abilities. In some cases, students might be supported by an individual education plan (IEP).

Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2006) paid attention to the importance of classroom environment such as well-managed lessons with good discipline and full involvement of the students in individual or collaborative work that provides autonomy in doing activities. The environment should motivate and engage students, allow them to discover and develop their potential, to overcome the socio-emotional issues in particular communicational problems with peers that gifted students often face (Chere & Hlalele, 2014).

McCoach and Siegle (2003a) declared that the collaboration of gifted students with low performance and students with high academic achievements leads to the improvement of academic results or a change in attitude toward learning among underachievers. As

well, negative attitudes of classmates toward underachievers are a cause of low interest in attaining good grades. In contrast, Berndt (1999) in his study discovered that the support of peers or close friends allowed underachievers to have better outcomes and have better relationships with their friends rather than students who did not get any support from their classmates. It shows the necessity for collaboration between peers that might be managed by the teacher through the application of beneficial strategies and approaches to organizing effective lessons (McCoach & Siegle, 2003a).

The relationship between the educational climate and academic outcomes is significant as there might be a mismatch between a beneficial educational environment, teaching style, and responding to needs. It is a fact that students have different learning styles and perceptions of information. Consequently, the teacher should consider strategies for-providing instructions and knowledge based on individual needs and abilities, to foster a positive educational climate which directs students towards success (Chere & Hlalele, 2014; Siegle & McCoach, 2009).

When instruction is not differentiated and lesson organization is not effective gifted students might become bored during the lesson possibly resulting in low academic performance. Plucker and McIntire (1996) studied the behavior of 12 gifted students from 5th to 9th grades and teacher reactions to them. Despite the fact that students were bored they could easily answer teacher's questions and take part in the discussion, but at the same time they disturbed the discipline and might fall asleep in the lesson. Teachers in this study mentioned that some of the students tried to create challenges for their learning for themselves, while others were passive. Thereby, the researchers came to the conclusion that boredom might be the cause and effect of-underachievement ( Kanevsky & Keighley,

2003). Consequently, as boredom is a factor influencing students' underachievement, it is important to understand the nature of the problem.

Kanevsky and Keighley (2003) examined 10 gifted underachievers who were between 15 and 18 years old. Findings regarding the nature of the boredom reflected the use of a teacher-centered approach, and the content and level of difficulty that were not appropriate for gifted students. It was discerned that students were controlled, and followed the teachers' instructions, autonomy was important as students wanted to choose the content and the process of the work. Another important factor was in teachers' attitude to the students. Students mentioned that teachers should not only be prepared for the lesson and consider their individual needs, but also show their interest in students' well-being and support them. Hence, boredom should be studied individually as this phenomenon is unique for every student, for instance, one gifted student might be bored from the lack challenging tasks while other factors might impact another student.

Consequently, well-organized lessons in which a teacher is interested in good results for his students that utilize different approaches and methods must be considered for establishing a rich environment to meet students' needs.

### **2.5.3 Family Factors**

There is much which testifies to the impact of family customs, culture, beliefs and attitudes on the personality development. Consequently, the analysis of family dynamics might uncover a child's behavior at school (Ibabe, 2016; Jolly, & Matthews, 2012; Pilarinos & Solomon, 2017). Rimm (1997) declared that the real reason for underachievement might be a poor family environment (as cited in Blaas, 2014, p. 247) and events such as divorce, death, and changing living conditions might negatively impact

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

28

the performance of gifted students (Zabloski & Milacci, 2012). The researcher pointed out that the style of parenting along with the attitude toward school affects students' academic performance (Rimm, 1998). Rim and Lowe (1988) argued that inconsistency of parents' expectations might be a barrier to learning, for example, if the mother has higher demands for academic achievements than the father it might be problematic for their child. In this case, one parent plays the role of "mean" parent who is strict with an authoritarian style while the other is a protector trying to reduce expectation levels of the first one. Thus, consistency in parenting is instrumental in learning behavior and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Rimm (2008) stated that gifted students are more frequently labeled underachievers if their parents are not involved or interested in the academic performance of their children. Parental involvement allows for having a complete understanding about a child's stage of development and successes in addition to providing an opportunity for helping with homework or giving appropriate psychosocial support in case of difficulties with social adjustment and engagement in social life and extra-curricular activities (Bicknell, 2014; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch & Darling, 1992). Consequently, parents might be "motivators, resource providers, monitors and advisers" for their children (Bicknell, 2014, p. 83). Meanwhile, other researchers demonstrate that not all families are able to provide support due to lack of experience and time or limited access to information concerning upbringing and assisting gifted students (Borland et al., 2000; Jolly, & Matthews, 2012). Further, those parents who are eager to collaborate with school might be commonly involved in school activities such as school meetings, developing school policies, mentoring with homework and other academic achievements. This has a great impact on students' achievements, but research studies reveal that the level of parental involvement

decreases considerably at the secondary school level because parents believe that their children must become more responsible (Bicknell, 2014).

It was declared that parents' perception of giftedness influences ways of caring and developing a child's abilities at home (Jolly & Matthews, 2012). Also, the researchers compared families of different incomes and ethnicities and reported that according to cultural peculiarities gifted children of one nationality (such as Chinese, Japanese, and Korean) get more support because giftedness is given a higher priority in that culture. In addition, low-income families are sometimes not able to provide much appropriate support or stimulating conditions (Jolly & Matthews, 2012). However, this cannot be generally applied to all families as the parents' attitudes and goals toward education and support of gifted students might vary despite the nationality, or economic status.

Moreover, divorce has a direct impact on children's behavior and academic performance. It has a long-term effect as the problem might not be recognized immediately. As a result, children might feel stress, depression, aggression, despair as well as losing motivation and their interests in education (Grubb & Long 2014).

It is clear that family plays a crucial role in their child's personality, so a family should be informed about how to support and interact with gifted students in order to contribute to developing giftedness and talents, and preventing underachievement.

## **2.6 Influence of Teachers' Attitudes on the Academic Achievements**

Attitude is very important issue in education as it has a great impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Many research studies demonstrate the key role of the attitude in the establishment of the collaborative relationships between students and teachers as well as providing a beneficial atmosphere during the lesson (David, 2001).

Ulug, Ozden and Eryilmaz, (2011) determined that a teacher has a key role in students' success. Consequently, students' achievements reflect the results of teachers' performance and the ability to motivate and engage them in the learning.

Positive attitudes influence the interaction of the stakeholders. Gifted students feel to what extent the teacher is interested in their achievements and how they respect and appreciate them (Glock, Kovacs, & Pit-ten Cate, 2018). Moreover, it influences the teaching, asking questions, giving feedback, awards and punishment (Ulug, et al., 2011).

Conversely, underachievers might feel that teacher ignores them during the lesson or does not provide appropriate support; therefore, students might change their behavior and attitude either towards the teacher or subject (David, 2001).

A teacher's positive attitude increases students' interest in the learning, motivation and academic achievements, whereas negative attitudes may lead to the failure, loss of the interaction and collaboration with teacher and possibly underachievement.

## **2.7 Reversing Underachievement**

The literature provides studies relating to the causes and effects influencing underachievement among gifted students that allows us to identify such students in the classrooms. However, there are still concerns about the most beneficial strategies and interventions that support gifted underachievers and address their needs (Reis & Greene, 2014; Ritchotte, Rubenstein & Murry, 2015). It is claimed that "there is no single intervention that will ameliorate underachievement for all gifted students" (Ritchotte et al., 2015, p. 103). Thus, every single case of underachievement requires deep investigation into its causes and needs of gifted students.

Rimm (1997) declared that the process of solving the problem of underachievement should include the collaboration of all stakeholders: school, family, and children as only if efforts are united, can support and final results be positive. Studies have suggested Trifocal Model that consists of six steps, where each step focuses on specific goals and intersects with others (Rimm, 1997). The initial stage is an assessment that identifies the type and level of underachievement. This stage is common to all improvement programs and interventions (Reis & Greene, 2014; Ritchotte et al., 2015). The next step includes communication among stakeholders to heighten awareness of the problem and select or change approaches in order to deal with the challenge (Rimm, 1997; Ritchotte et al., 2015). Also, Rimm (2008) said that “When teachers plan to talk to parents or vice versa, it is helpful to remember that both environments are reinforcing the underachieving patterns, and both parents and teachers should change their approaches to these children” (p. 188). This step is obligatory in the process of reversing underachievement as it helps inform all parties about the existing problem by analyzing what has already been done in order that an action plan can be developed. The third step is Changing Expectations since as gifted students face the issue of goal evaluation, their expectations and goals might be lower than teachers and parents' expectations. Consequently, this stage demonstrates to gifted students how to evaluate their skills and knowledge to establish realistic goals and expectations (Rimm, 1996; Reis & Greene, 2014). Also, it is necessary to identify the Role Models that might positively influence students' behavior and monitor their success. The fifth step includes correction skills and behavior deficiencies. The researcher highlighted the importance of utilizing various approaches such as differentiation, problem-based learning, using multiple-method of instructions during the lessons and extra-curricular activities (Rimm, 1997). These five steps might be appraised as basic and suitable for all schools

where the phenomenon of underachievement is a concern. However, the school should consider local features and school core values in adapting these steps of the Trifocal Model by Rimm (1997).

The final step Modification at Home and School is both the most complicated and beneficial stage as it provides support for meeting students' needs. For instance, despite boring homework, students might be involved in special clubs or extra classes where they are able to revise and apply their knowledge. At this stage, curricular and extracurricular activities should be revised and modified according to skill levels, interests, and requirements of the gifted students (Passow et al., 1993; Rimm, 1997; Ritchotte et al, 2015).

Many educators focused attention on the curricular modification for gifted underachievers (Passow et al., 1993; Rimm, 1997; Reis & Greene, 2014; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Ritchotte et al., 2015). Rise (2003) in his work affirmed that one of the reasons leading to underachievement is inappropriate curriculum that does not correspond to the needs and abilities of a gifted student. Also, Passow, Mönks and Heller (1993) insisted that appropriate curriculum develops students' abilities, increase the academic potential, and activate their cognitive interests. Therefore, a school might modify the curriculum targeting acceleration or enrichment according to the domain talent and needs of the students (Baum et al., 1995; Reis, 2003; Renzulli, 2014; Renzulli & Renzulli, 2010; Ritchotte et al., 2015).

Thus, there are many schools that have their own models and strategies for meeting gifted students' needs. The school enrichment model (SEM) which has been derived from the Triad Model (Renzulli, 1977). SEM identifies 3 levels of enrichment. The first level looks at students' diverse interests; the next level aims to develop a students' thinking;

while the final level addresses problem solving skills through research projects. These three levels of skills are the basic principles of this Model. SEM also considers the creation of student portfolios that capitalize on the students learning style and individual strengths. Teachers help students reach their potential through task differentiation, curriculum modification and enrichment (Renzulli & Renzulli, 2010). Generally, it is focused on developing the educational environment with appropriate conditions in order to uncover the inner abilities of all students as well as self-development of their cognitive, emotional, physical, spiritual and creative abilities.

According to Renzulli and Renzulli (2010), this model fosters improvement of the whole class through lessons organized according to the Triad Model. As well as, use of the Total Talent Portfolio, including information about students' interests and learning styles is carried out at the school level through curriculum modification. On the basis of this model Curriculum Enrichment includes vertical acceleration such as skipping the grade, and horizontal acceleration that aimed to develop students' knowledge through providing high level sources or organizing extra-curricular activities.

Another type of acceleration that is paid great attention is Mentoring (Colangelo, Assouline, & Gross, 2004; Rimm, 1996). The Mentoring service includes the organization of individual or group support, acceleration of the program, provision of additional resources and additionally, it makes a connection among stakeholders (Renzulli & Renzulli, 2010; Rimm, 1996). Finally, this Model demonstrates the causes and possible strategies for change that might be implemented in order to provide a holistic service for gifted and talented students. However, there are still arguments about the models that might be implemented to work with gifted students as all of them have their advantages

and specific features that should be adjusted in different areas. Consequently, the school should consider school values and characteristics of gifted individuals while selecting an appropriate model or strategies (Passow et al., 1993).

In analyzing the literature it can be concluded that there are no universal definitions for the terms giftedness and underachievement (Siegle & McCoach, 2009). However, many researchers explain underachievement as a discrepancy between students' performance and potential (Reis & McCoach, 2000). Therefore, investigation of teachers' perception of the phenomenon underachievement among academically gifted students should be done on the base of the existing theoretical knowledge in the local context (Baker et al., 1998; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Ritchotte et al., 2016; Siegle & McCoach, 2005).

## **2.8 Conceptual Framework**

This study investigates teachers' perceptions of underachievement among the academically gifted; thus social constructivism theory was selected as the epistemological lens to study this issue. The social constructivist paradigm allows for examining participants' daily experience, personal viewpoints, understanding and attitude towards the central phenomenon in the local context (Creswell, 2012; Kim, 2001).

According to the social constructivism theory, the meaning of the central concept is formed on the base of the communication. Kim (2010) declared that knowledge appears from the interaction with members of one society; consequently an open-ended interview gives a chance to communicate with members of one school community who work with gifted students (p.3). The meaning of gifted underachievement will be constructed on the basis of teachers' responses. This helps to deepen understanding of what the concept of

underachievement means, what the typical factors are affecting students' academic achievement, and approaches that teachers believe are beneficial to serve gifted underachievers.

Social constructivism provides the opportunity to synthesize the data collected from participants about their experience and understanding of the central phenomenon. It considers local features and culture in order to conclude what gifted underachievement means for teachers (Creswell, 2012; Kim, 2001).

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This chapter studied the definitions of giftedness and underachievement from different perspectives. Also, the literature review reflects approaches in identifying underachievers among gifted students including the individual, family and school-related factors affecting academic achievement. It uncovers the influence of the attitudes towards academic achievements. Various methods to prevent and avoid underachievement and to meet the needs of gifted students were presented. However, there was no mention of any studies or findings referring to the local context as underachievement have yet to be researched in Kazakhstan. Finally, the theory of social constructivism which is the epistemological perspective of this study was presented and will be used to guide the development of the research.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

While the previous chapter discussed the literature that is the theoretical basis for this study, this chapter provides justifications and explanations for the methodology and methods chosen to collect and analyze the data.

The first section of the chapter introduces the research design. This is followed by sections which describe the sample, site, and method of data collection. The final section presents the data analysis, and ethical considerations.

### **3.2 Research Design and rationale**

According to the purpose of the study which investigates teachers' perceptions of underachievement, qualitative research was determined as the most suitable methodology. It allowed for deeper exploration and understanding of the investigated phenomenon; it provided an opportunity for participants of the study to analyze and reflect on their experience. A case study design was chosen to address the objectives and respond to the research questions. It enabled the researcher to develop a holistic picture of this issue in real time in one school in East Kazakhstan. Firstly, researchers believe that case study within a qualitative research allows for better understanding of teachers' perceptions, attitudes of the central phenomenon and investigation of teachers' experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2009). Secondly, a case study provides an opportunity to explore underachievement in "the real-life context" among the staff in the chosen research site (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2009, p.18). Consequently, the study enables the researcher to collect extensive data and explore teachers' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about gifted underachievers.

### **3.3 Research Site**

The research site is a school for gifted students in the East Kazakhstan Region. The sampling site was selected because this school has been working with a gifted population for more than ten years enabling a better understanding of the central phenomenon. It is a secondary school that includes 700 students from grades 7 to 12 and about 190 members of the school staff.

### **3.4 Sample and sampling procedures**

Purposeful sampling was selected as a means to recruit participants to explore teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward underachievement among gifted students in the school. The site and participants were chosen intentionally as it allows investigation of the phenomenon in-depth (Creswell, 2012, p. 206). Purposeful sampling allows selection participants who are "information rich" (Patton, 1990, cited in Creswell, 2012, p. 206) or "knowledgeable people" (Cohen, 2007, p. 115), consequently participants could contribute to understanding of the phenomenon of underachievement on the basis of their experience and knowledge.

The researcher asked the School Principal permission to obtain information about teachers' backgrounds. The deputy director provided the list of the teachers who have worked at school more than five years in order to choose and recruit the interview participants. The number of participants chosen was 11. They were chosen according to the study's eligibility criteria: it was intended that participants should be teachers of different school subjects as they could speak about underachievement considering the peculiarities of their subjects. The second criterion was no less than 5-years work experience with the gifted students. The researcher expected that respondents would be able to analyze and

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
 ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
 REGION

reflect on their teaching experience in order to speak about the factors influencing underachievement. Table 1 summarizes the research participants.

**Table 1. Participants' characteristics**

No.	Pseudonym	School subject	Age	Gender	Years of work experience with gifted students
1	Teacher A	IT	50	M	15 years
2	Teacher B	Math	34	F	6 years
3	Teacher F	English	34	M	8 years
4	Teacher G	Literature	35	F	10 years
5	Teacher L	Chemistry	33	F	12 years
6	Teacher M	Biology	45	F	20 years
7	Teacher N	Russian	51	F	10 years
8	Teacher O	English	59	F	7 years
9	Teacher R	History	48	F	15 years
10	Teacher S	Physics	30	M	6 years
11	Teacher Z	Global Perspectives and Research	31	F	9 years

The age of the participants ranged from 30 to 59 and the average years of work experience with a gifted population is 10 years.

### **3.5 Data collection instruments**

The study utilized semi-structured interviews based on open-ended questions as according to Creswell (2012) it collects more detailed and deeper information. The researcher needs to manage the type of information that is required for study, in case the participant deviates from the topic of discussion and moves to the supplying irrelevant information (Cohen et al., 2007).

The interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis, which provided the opportunity to understand each participant's personal perceptions and attitudes towards this phenomenon. Additionally, Oppenheim (2007) proposed that the interview motivates participants to provide more specific information on the issue and be involved in the interview. Both the interviewer and interviewee can ask clarifications if the question or response is unclear while the using a one-to-one interview (as cited in Cohen et al., 2007, p. 352).

The interview included 11 open-ended questions which were designed to address the research questions of the study. The interview questions were developed in such a way as to make participants critically think about their teaching experience and practice in terms of the research topic. Initially, a pilot interview was conducted with one of my colleagues to evaluate approximate time and accuracy of the questions. The pilot interview revealed that one of the questions was unclear; hence, it was revised.

The researcher developed interview protocols in Russian, Kazakh and English (see attachments A, B and C). It includes the general notes and rules that should be followed by the interviewer and demographic information: age, gender, and the years of experience teaching gifted students.

### **3.6 Data collection procedures**

The Researcher received the letter of support from the NUGSE IREC giving approval to conduct the study. Then the Researcher attached the letter of support and NUGSE approval and emailed school principal to obtain permission to collect data for the research.

The interviews were completed by December 1, 2019. The most convenient place and time of conducting the interview was arranged with participants through the e-mail and telephone conversations. The interviews were held at school as teachers could not leave their working place as a result of their busy schedule. The individual interviews were held in a separate room at the school. The aim was to establish an informal atmosphere to make the participant feel confident and secure enough to fully engage in the discussion (Cohen et al., 2007).

At the beginning of the interview, each participant was informed about the nature and purpose of the study along with rights, possible benefits and drawbacks of the participation in the interview. The participant signed and was provided with the hard copy of the Consent Form. The duration of each interview lasted approximately 25-30 minutes. All participants preferred to communicate in their first language – Russian. The responses were recorded on a Dictaphone and the researcher took some notes during the interview. Almost all participants were interested in the investigating phenomenon and gave rich answers complemented with examples.

### **3.7 Data analysis methods**

This section explains the process of data analysis. Initially, in order to prepare collected data for the analysis, the interviews recorded by Dictaphone were uploaded on

the laptop into one file folder. Then each interview was transcribed including the notes of non-verbal communications that researcher jotted down during the interview. Each interview was listened to and checked by the researcher several times in order to eliminate any inaccuracies.

The next stage included reading and coding the data manually that was categorized into themes and as result provided the general picture of the collected data (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2012).

Thematic analysis was chosen as the most suitable approach to analyze the collected data and describe the investigated phenomenon. This approach allows the examining of the perceptions, beliefs, experience and feelings. The researcher was able to focus on the phrases and sentences that allowed the explaining and interpretation of the data (Saldaña, 2015).

Creswell (2012) suggested using three-column organization for the coding process (p. 239). The researcher used the first column for the interview questions, the second column allocated for the text of the interview, while the third column devoted for the notes including coding. Initially, on the base of the coding there were defined nine categories and ten subcategories which further were grouped into three themes based on the research questions (Cohen et al., 2007, Saldaña, 2015). Mainly, the themes concerned teachers' understanding of the central phenomenon, teachers' attitude and work experience with gifted underachievers. Then categories were included in the matrix that allowed grouping into the themes and observation of the holistic picture and connections between data that assisted in the analysis and interpretation (Maxwell, 2013).

All the interviews were collected and transcribed in Russian in order to analyze authentic text in order to avoid misinterpretation as a result of the translation. For the

purpose of this thesis the findings were translated into English and are presented in the Findings chapter.

### **3.8 Ethical Concerns and Risks of Research**

Creswell (2014) discussed the necessity of avoiding putting the target group at any risks; consequently, the researcher followed the appropriate ethical procedures in order to protect participants' rights and confidentiality (p.89). First of all, the formal letter of permission to conduct the research was sent to the school principal. When the permission was obtained, the researcher made an appointment with each participant prior to the interview. Before the interview, the participants were introduced to the research through the consent form. This informed the participants that the interview will be confidential and personal information of the participants, which might be used to identify the person, will not be collected. Moreover, the researcher will not mention the name of the School that is the research site in the study. The names of participants were coded to protect their identities. All information recorded during the interview was anonymized and saved on the personal laptop with a protected password. Interview protocols, consent forms, researcher's notes and hard copy of the interview were kept in a secure place where only the researcher has access.

The participants of the study were able to choose the language of the consent form and interview. The researcher assured the participants that she would not evaluate their personal experience and would use the data to address the research questions only and not for any other purposes.

The teachers were given time to make a decision about participation in the interview, as well as they had sufficient time to consider the answers without any pressure.

The researcher did not determine any obvious risks for participants associated with this study. They were assured that the researcher would make every effort to keep their responses confidential and participating would in no way affect their employment at the school.

The findings of this study enabled to teachers to analyze curriculum, interventions, approaches, and methods used during the lesson with gifted students who are underachieving. It might lead to studying and implementation of new strategies to support gifted underachievers in the school context (Bennett-Rappell & Northcote, 2016; Hoover-Schultz, 2005).

### **3.9 Conclusion**

The Methodology chapter is aimed to discuss and provide justification for the chosen research design addressing the research questions. The semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Eleven interview respondents were selected according to the above described criteria. Interview data was analyzed through an iterative approach that indicated the general themes. The researcher followed the ethical considerations, which were developed on the basis of suggested standards and followed throughout the research. The following Chapter introduces the findings of this research.

## **Chapter 4: Findings**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of the study aimed to explore teachers' understanding and perceptions of the phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted students, and teachers' beliefs of how the issues relating to underachievement of gifted students can be improved.

The first section dwells on teachers' perceptions of underachievement that stem from their understanding of the core definition, ability to identify these students and factors they believe influence underachievement. The second section is focused on the teachers' attitudes towards gifted underachievers; while the third section discusses the strategies that teachers' believe might improve underachievement. Each section includes subthemes and respondents' quotes as evidence towards understanding of the core issues.

### **4.2 Teachers' understanding of the term underachievement among academically gifted students and factors influencing it.**

This section is set out to determine 1) teacher perceptions of underachievement among academically gifted students through analyzing their personal experience and understanding of the core phenomenon; 2) to what extent teachers are able to identify gifted underachievers and 3) recognize the factors impacting this phenomenon.

Prior studies in the literature review have noted the importance of a common definition for the term underachievement to provide a more effective educational environment and support for gifted populations. According to the collected data, all respondents highlighted the significance of common definitions for the terms: underachievement and gifted students. Teacher R declared that "...*the common agreed*

*interpretation of the terms allows teachers to organize a more successful and holistic educational environment for all students whether they are gifted or in the basic population.*” When they were asked to give the definition for gifted underachievers in their school, most of participants suggested that it is based on the discrepancy between IQ scores and classroom achievements. However, they expressed concern about a different understanding of the term achievement and the assessment system among teachers in this school. All respondents mentioned that the system of evaluating students’ performance had been changed several times over the last ten years. As a result, teachers might have multiple views on the interpretation of the term assessment and apply varied approaches of evaluating students’ achievements. Therefore, the students’ performance might be overestimated or underestimated without a shared understanding of the term and system of the evaluation of students’ achievements it can contribute to underachievement. Teacher O:

*Now, academic achievement is rather controversial concept for me. New criteria based assessment system reflects students’ achievement through achieved learning objectives; therefore students do not get grades. Students’ achievements depend on the rubrics and criteria that I prepare for the assignments. Finally, gifted underachiever might have good results on my lesson according to the criteria and show lower results on the base of the criteria of another teacher on the same subject.*

Despite the concerns, ten teachers interpreted academic achievement as the successful achievement of objectives set in the subject programs. Teacher M and F added that achievement is the level of skills and knowledge that should match the standards indicated in the school educational program. Additionally, teacher R expressed her fears that “*while the system of assessment is revised and modified we might make mistakes with assessment, as well as be confused with the real interpretation of the term achievement.*” Consequently, the respondents in the interview highlighted that the term academic

achievement should be more frequently raised at school meetings. It allows the school to monitor whether the staff shares a common understanding of the term achievement and application of the assessment system at school.

Addressing the issue of defining the term underachievement, teacher Z viewed a gifted underachiever as *“a student with strong mental potential in one sphere, for instance in math, but in other subjects, he cannot achieve the objectives or does not want to perform well and acquire appropriate skills and knowledge.”* as well as teachers R and G concurred with this. Similarly, teacher M viewed a gifted underachiever as *“a student with high academic abilities in specific subjects, who tends to develop and improve skills only in a specific area. However, this student demonstrates academic gaps and low achievements in subjects that he is not interested in.”* and teacher N shared this view. Moreover, teacher A defined it as *“a student with high mental capabilities who is not able to manage his time effectively, so he has problems with academic achievements.”* According to teacher G *“the gifted underachiever has high IQ, but his academic performance is low because of personal factors.”*

At the beginning of each interview, all participants emphasized the difficulty of an appropriate and common understanding of the key terms as well as a need for a common definition. However, the analyzed findings indicated that the participants in this school did have a common understanding of the concept. On the basis of the responses, teachers defined a gifted underachiever as a student a student with high mental abilities, who nonetheless might demonstrate low academic performance in some subjects.

#### **4.2.1 Factors contributing to gifted underachievement**

**Identification tools.** This section discusses tools utilized to identify gifted

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

47

underachievers and factors contributing to the underachievement. Identification is necessary in order to understand if teachers are able to recognize underachievers and provide better services for them. In order to know how teachers identify gifted underachievers, they were asked about special identification instruments accepted and used at school. Teacher A indicated that:

*Students are given a questionnaire where they can reflect on their weak and strong sides in the subjects. Hence teachers and curators are able to identify the problem and provide additional support for the students.*

Whereas teacher N stated that “*the school psychologists test students and share the results with teachers.*”

Teacher F said that he had dealt with underachievers but had never heard about actions and instruments utilized at school to identify gifted underachievers. However, the rest of the participants noted that the main method for identification is teacher observation. Teachers are able to observe and analyze students' behavior and performance during lessons and then present their findings at the teachers' meetings. Teacher O noted that:

*We have a period of time to observe and analyze the behavior and personality of each student in our classroom. Consequently, on the basis of our observations, we are able to recognize if a student needs additional attention and support. Then we collaborate with other subject teachers of the student with low educational performance to identify the real reason for underachievement and find solutions. But, it happens not continuously so usually teachers cope with the problems individually.*

These comments indicate that the core instrument in identifying gifted underachievers at the participating school is teacher observation. However, two of the respondents added that psychologists' investigations are similarly involved as the tool that might assist in identifying learning problems among the gifted population.

All participants emphasized during the interview that there are several reasons for

underachievement that they generally discover through the process of observation and analysis of students' behavior. They discussed some common factors contributing to underachievement that can be classified as individual, school-related and family factors.

***Individual factors.*** All participants believed that individual factors are one of the most common reasons for poor academic performance among gifted underachievers. According to the data provided by interview respondents, there were three main individual factors contributing to underachievement. They are motivation, which was indicated as the crucial issue influencing student achievement, self-regulation, and goal orientation.

***Motivation.*** Underachievement might appear among gifted students when they have a lack of motivation for the subject, topics, and the level of assignments or the way of delivering information during the lesson. Some teachers pointed out that interest is a fundamental basis for successful learning. Teacher A stated that:

*A student might be interested in one subject or have a certain field of interest, for instance, Physics, so he is highly motivated to study it. Consequently, he will spend all his time and desire investigating new topics, conducting experiments, taking part in the competitions and forget about other subjects. Such student tends to be perfect in one field, so he is considered as motivated.*

Analyzing teachers' responses it is clear that they specified intrinsic motivation of gifted students as a key factor to success. Teacher Z provided an example from personal experience when one student, who demonstrated high achievement in social science was the winner of international social Olympiads and involved in different national projects, but had problems with the other subjects. Several times he was on the list of candidates who might be expelled from school as a result of low academic performance. He had a lot of problems and pressure at school because of his underachievement. This example demonstrates that intrinsic motivation is a core force to obtain success and reach personal goals despite external pressure. Another example, provided by teacher R, illustrates a

situation in which an intrinsically motivated student lost his interest in the subject as a result of the extrinsic influence of teachers and family. Teacher R pointed out

*... This student was very talented in Physics and Astronomy, he showed excellent results in this sphere, he went abroad to take a part in competitions, conferences and exchange his knowledge with international students. However, he had problems with some subjects and every week there were organized meetings with subject teachers, parents, and curators. The main agenda was the necessity of reaching good achievements for all school subjects. Finally, they made him pay attention to other disciplines against his will. Now, this student demonstrates average academic results and does not have a specific interest in any subject ... We have lost an outstanding talent.*

These examples reveal the fact that motivated students enjoy what they are doing and intend to reach their high potential.

**Self-regulation.** In particular, 50% of interview respondents were concerned that gifted students were challenged in their ability to plan and regulate their time, and establish priorities. According to Teacher R *"If we look at students' homework or some additional assignments we can find that they might be untidy or disorganized. I suppose it happens because they do it early in the morning or before the lesson."*

Teacher G added:

*...some of my students from the 'at risk' group usually ask for an extension for their assignments. ... I would like to mention that teachers are obliged to balance the amount of homework and agree with colleagues. This issue is under the control of administration and we are not allowed to give extensive tasks. The main reason for failing the homework is incorrect planning of students' daily routine.*

Moreover, Teacher S assumed that the main cause of lack of self-regulation is grounded in the absence of the practice of appropriate time-management among students. Consequently, they do not have experience or examples of how to organize their time effectively. Additionally, respondents supposed that some teachers are not able to manage their time well and therefore they do not model a good example of well-organized daily activities for students. Thus, students are not able to observe and imitate a well-balanced

schedule of tasks.

Teachers, referring to their observations of students, found students are not able to manage their timetables and actions, set-goals effectively and establish priorities. Interview responses illustrated that the participants believe that gifted underachievers are not able to balance activities inside and outside school. Some gifted students prefer to spend time in different clubs or playing with their friends or computer games rather than learning. These actions may lead to an adverse effect on academic achievements.

**Goal-orientation.** Furthermore, three respondents declared that gifted students are very goal-oriented. However, they do not discern the benefits of and the relationship between personal goals and provided lesson activities, homework or school subjects they might ignore them, and as a result, become underachievers. Teacher Z noted that some students refused to do some tasks provided by teacher claiming that they would not apply this knowledge in their daily life or they did not understand the real goals of the assignment. Teacher R added that some underachievers spoke about the opportunity to miss some lessons. These students demonstrated the desire to be home schooled as they believe that could better learn valuable and interesting aspects of relevance by themselves. Thus, in some cases, gifted students focus on the learning and subjects that might impact and be priceless for their future profession and life. Thereby, they are satisfied with low or passing grades for the subjects they consider as less interesting and deemed unbeneficial.

In contrast, Teacher L highlighted that “*Some of the underachievers are not able to set and accomplish goals; therefore, they do not understand the real goal of education in their lives and as a result, they do not tend to have good achievements.*” Teachers believed that the ability to understand the value of education and define certain goals and aims allows students to focus on their education and establish priorities.

**School-related factors.** All of the respondents pointed out that school environmental factors impact academic achievements. Common factors were defined as an inconsistency between the school curriculum and the academic needs of gifted students, teacher instruction, and peer relationships.

***Inconsistency between the school curriculum and students' academic needs***

Almost 90% of respondents declared that school curriculum does not completely meet gifted students' needs. According to the interviewed participants, the school curriculum is too overloaded with subjects. Teacher A indicated:

*The curriculum is overloaded with subjects and compulsory extra-curricular activities that students are obliged to attend. I do not want to say that they are useless. However, I believe that students might manage their time more effectively if they were to have an opportunity to select subjects and activities. Students might spend their free time developing their skills.*

Teacher G added:

*... every school subject should be studied in-depth according to the educational program. Nevertheless, it must be noted that gifted students are usually interested in one sphere, for instance, Math or Chemistry, so they might be less motivated to study other subjects such as Art or Psychology. Unfortunately, they do not have a chance to choose subjects of their interest. Hence, they might lose interest in the subjects and in the worst case in the school.*

The respondents have discussed the importance of a well-developed and well-balanced curriculum, and could understand to some extent how the current curriculum might negatively influence students' academic achievements. Additionally, the importance of elective subjects and their role in the educational process was highlighted.

In turn, Teacher F emphasized that some gifted students require different periods of time in order to cope, think or analyze the same assignments or activities according to personal characteristics, age-sensitivity, and influence of external factors. In this case, an

individual education plan or enrichment program might be provided to help them reach their potential; however, this school has not implemented such a process yet.

The findings demonstrate that teachers are concerned about issues relating to the curriculum and time management, which some gifted students find challenging to organize effectively. Moreover, Teacher R and M noted that the school curriculum and subject programs limits and puts gifted and talented students in boxes without giving opportunity to be free in their choice of subjects. They have to follow school requirements and do not have the chance to manage their schedule in terms that might allow them to better fulfill their educational needs. Some gifted students accept and learn inside these educational frames, while others tend to reject established requirements.

*Teacher's instruction* According to the responses it was determined that the educational environment may negatively impact upon the academic achievements of some gifted students. Teacher L mentioned that *"If we observe some lessons, we might discover that not all teachers differentiate their instructions and tasks. Activities and conditions are the same for all students."* Lesson activities should challenge, encourage and involve students to apply the knowledge from the field of interest to another subject. Teacher F mentioned that gifted students feel the teacher's aspiration or desire to support their abilities. Certainly, if the lesson and activities are boring and based on routine it leads to underachievement and a lack of motivation.

Additionally, the response of Teacher Z discussed that teachers are interested in their students receiving high grades as they are considered indicators of the teachers' ability. In the middle of the term or at the end of the year the school administration shows statistics on students' achievements for different subjects. Thus, in some cases underachievers suffer from pressure during the lesson as teachers will push for better

results. Teachers mentioned that they might give extra assignments or focus students' attention on their weaknesses. Moreover, it was assumed that the teacher might highlight the weak sides of the students' assignments in front of the class or provide negative feedback. It has a negative impact on students, especially gifted and talented students as they tend to be more sensitive to the teachers' actions and attitudes. Consequently, they might withdraw and ignore the subject. This may result in a loss of motivation to demonstrate high academic achievement.

Almost all respondents have taken the stance that differentiated instructions may prevent students from underachievement. This strategy is useful in aligning skills and abilities on the basis of their learning styles, level of their knowledge and other particularities. It was believed that if all teachers applied differentiation in their teaching, they could capture students' attention and better challenge all students during the lesson.

***Peer-relationship.*** Half of the respondents in this research mentioned that students' acceptance and attitudes towards each other are quite influential on their individual academic achievements. Teacher N pointed out that

*... seventh grade students are very vulnerable to the comments and critique of their peers. I have observed the situation when one gifted student lost his interest in asking additional questions as his peers began to make fun of him. Moreover, in some cases, students give offensive nicknames and do not include in their social group children that might be a little different.*

Respondents added that students want to be accepted in the school community, blend in with their peers and avoid being categorized and stereotyped. Teacher Z declared that it is important to consider age-sensitivities and support students to establish relationships during the lesson. However, it is impossible to influence and control them completely; especially, when many issues happen when children are outside of the classroom.

**Family-related factors.** Students may face problems that are not related to school. In such cases, it is rather complicated to understand the real cause of their underachievement. It happens when the family and student do not reveal issues affecting their private life. In such situations, it is difficult to provide appropriate support for students and take specific actions. Two main reasons were identified as influencing academic underachievement among gifted students. They are lack of parental involvement in the educational process and divorce.

**Parental involvement.** According to the respondents, parental involvement can have both a positive and negative impact on students' academic achievements. Respondents indicated that modern parents make every endeavor to be excluded from the educational process believing that the school is responsible for the education and upbringing of their children. Teacher L depicted that *"Sometimes gifted children expect parents' appreciation of their high academic achievements. In reality, they get indifference and inactions from their close people and lose-interest in achieving high results"* Teacher S added that some parents do not understand how to deal with their child's giftedness, and at the same time they do not communicate with teachers who are able to lead and demonstrate what might be done to enforce and maintain the development of a child's abilities and talents.

In contrast, parents' high expectations and pressure might have an adverse effect on gifted students' behavior and academic performance.

Teacher Z commented:

*There might be parents' high expectations when they impose their view that the child has to have only excellent grades and that is very important for the diploma and further education at university. If you do not achieve high results you might fail your examinations and be a loser. I think such pressure will demotivate students and lead to underachievement. I want to share that when I feel pressure*

*or someone makes me do something, certainly, I will not do it to the best of my ability. However, if I understand that people believe and trust me, I am ready to make every effort to achieve the goal and meet the expectations. The same situation happens with students.*

Moreover, teachers highlighted that parental involvement in the educational process should be consistent; however, too many parents prefer to stay on the sidelines as passive observers.

**Divorce.** Families do not always want share their problems with school psychologists or teachers; therefore, it is challenging to identify the core reason for underachievement and unpredictable behavior of gifted students. Teacher R pointed out that “... *parents believe that they are able to cope with family’s problems by themselves and do not need any support. Hence, they are not able to recognize to what extent their children suffer from the situation.*” Children might turn inward or become aggressive, lose interest or motivation, or miss lessons. Teacher G added that “*When children want to draw parents’ attention, they change their behavior and this may be poor academic performance.*” Nevertheless, respondents emphasized that this factor is common for all students not just the gifted. It is a very complicated issue because teachers do not have an opportunity to look inside the family problem and offer help. However, they stated that divorce is one of the key family related factors that significantly influenced underachievement among their students.

#### **4.3 Teachers’ attitude towards underachievement among academically gifted students**

In order to understand how teachers perceive underachievement among academically gifted students it is critical to investigate their attitudes toward the core phenomenon. Initially, the interview respondents noted that they rarely categorized students as gifted students, and gifted underachievers. However, findings demonstrate the

fact that all teachers have experience of working with gifted underachievers, however their attitudes vary. The results revealed that nine teacher participants have a positive attitude towards gifted underachievers, while two teachers were negative about teaching and serving gifted students with low academic performance at this research site.

**4.3.1 Positive attitude.** According to the findings, the interviewees demonstrated their positive attitude towards gifted students with low academic achievements expressing their willingness to support such students. Teacher P noted out that:

*People cannot be gifted in all spheres... for instance, Gardner's' Theory of Multiple Intelligence demonstrates different intelligences and that people might have some of them. Consequently, if a child is good at the logical-mathematical sphere, he might have problems with linguistics.*

In particular, the majority of the respondents reiterated that students might have problems with some subjects because they have highly developed abilities and skills in other areas. Additionally, it was noted that the respondents realize that students might prioritize some subjects over others as they evaluate them as more important and beneficial to their future. In contrast, other school subjects might be time consuming, difficult and considered a waste of time by the students. Unfortunately, the school curriculum at this school does not provide an opportunity to select subjects according to students' interests and talents, so teachers understand this situation and are eager to help.

Teacher Z highlighted that it is necessary to respect every student whether they have low or high achievements in the subject. *"However, as teachers we are obliged to find out the real reason of underachievement and monitor the academic progress during lessons."* Teacher F said:

*If I monitor that the student with low academic performance shows excellent progress in other subjects and subject teachers give good recommendations and indicate his high potential, for instance, in Physics this is important knowledge for me. Consequently, I will adjust my requirements based on the student's level of intellectual abilities for my subject.*

Certainly, respondents understand that gifted students have great potential and talent in a certain sphere; nevertheless, it might not always be obvious as a result of lack of, or inappropriate support. Teacher G shared *"It is a tragedy if the child is not able to realize his giftedness as not everyone has such abilities."* Additionally, Teacher S declared that sometimes teachers cannot effectively evaluate students' abilities and as a result, gifted students might have *"hidden giftedness"* with their potential going unnoticed. Further, it might be realized if the talents and skills are given the opportunity to develop, enabling the student to experience greater success. He said, *"I really regret that some teachers cannot understand gifted underachievers and they do not make additional efforts for developing and unlocking their skills."*

Moreover, Teacher O explained that it is necessary to uncover possible links between subjects where underachiever demonstrates high and low performance. Teachers should endeavor to find ways to encourage the gifted underachiever. Respondent R said *"I believe that there aren't ungifted people. All of us have abilities that might be developed to a particular level."*

**4.3.2. Negative attitude.** Compared to respondents' positive views toward gifted underachievers, negative attitudes were observed less. There were two respondents who expressed their negative position mostly to school requirements, management and curriculum that impact upon a student's underachievement. Respondent B shared that:

*I had gifted underachievers in my classes. They were gifted in one direction, not in my subject... they evaluated my subject as useless... they did not want to concentrate their attention and make any attempts to show good results. However,*

*they had a general understanding of the subject... they did not do the provided activities and tasks.... I realize that not all subjects should be compulsory for students. But I had to assess their achievements and give grades, so I had to follow them and ask them to be responsible and accept my help. It was really irritating because they did not want to do anything, while I was making efforts to help them.*

Another respondent reiterated that it is the fault of the school that gifted students become underachievers; it means that there is not appropriate support or services as well as an individualized education plan. This respondent highlighted “*teachers are responsible for the good educational achievements of these students and very often become babysitters for them. I think it is absolutely unsustainable.*” However, Teacher L added that “*I am ready to help, but if underachiever does not want to show any interest and cooperate with me, consequently, I can do nothing.*” There should be collaboration between teachers and gifted underachievers in order to eliminate problems and organize beneficial work to help them address their needs. Teachers mentioned that there is only one stakeholder (teacher) who is ready to work and find solutions but there is little to no support from the administration.

Respondents expressed their opinion about the existing problem with gifted underachievers and the reasons for their negative attitude. However, they do not deny the fact that they are ready to help these students through the provision of necessary support and actions, but only if underachievers demonstrate their commitment to improve their academic performance. Through real collaboration, the teachers and students' attitude may be dramatically improved. Consequently, academic achievements will be higher and the core problem improved.

#### **4.4 Strategies teachers believe are useful to improve underachievement among gifted students**

Analysis revealed that seven out of eleven respondents have no special knowledge on how to reverse or support gifted underachievement. They claimed that they are not familiar with international or local experience including any strategies and approaches to provide appropriate services or organize effective work with underachievers. There were three teachers who shared their international practice and their observation of well-organized work in gifted programs in international schools.

##### **4.4.1 Personal experience**

*Differentiation.* Seven of the teachers believe that the most effective strategy utilized during the lesson is differentiation. Teacher G commented “*When I understand that the level or type of-task does not satisfy needs of the student I try to change it. I take into consideration the peculiarities of the student’s learning style to prepare more suitable tasks and engage the student in the lesson.*” Moreover, teacher R added that there are optional different level tasks that students are able to select during the lesson if the provided ones do not meet their level. Teachers O and P highlighted that they regularly applied differentiation strategies during their lessons. Additionally, Teacher F said “... *along with differentiated instructions I also select differentiated assessment techniques and differentiate assessment criteria on the basis of the students’ abilities. It is very time consuming, however, I believe it prevents my students from becoming underachievers.*” This finding supports the idea that the best strategy to eliminate underachievement is through task differentiation.

***Individual support.*** According to the respondents' comments, gifted underachievers need encouragement and the nurturing of a good relationship with teachers which encourages beneficial collaboration. Teacher R shared:

*I believe that it is very important to provide support and develop a good relationship with students. I need to know that they feel comfortable in my lessons, as it further develops the student's abilities. And the second important goal for me is the development of comfortable socio-emotional atmosphere on the lessons.*

Respondents have realized that if underachievers feel support and teachers' interest in the improvement of their low academic achievement, consequently, it might encourage them to improve their performance and overall self-development.

Teacher Z pointed out that face-to-face conversations with students helps to improve underachievement. From the teachers Z's personal experience, regular informal discussions allowed her to define the real reason for underachievement and work towards a solution. Teacher A highlighted that "... *personal conversations allow for developing the individualized plan with objectives and actions that student should follow to reduce the learning gap.*" Good relationships, encouragement, and collaboration might be a root through which to treat and reverse underachievement among academically gifted students; the focus should be on the students' potential, success and abilities.

#### **4.4.2 International experience**

Three interview participants had international experience that they are planning to suggest and implement at the school. They felt that the solution of treating and preventing underachievement is reducing the number of subjects in the curriculum, determining compulsory and elective subjects, providing students the opportunity to select subjects, clubs, and the development with their teachers of an individualized educational plan. Teacher R asserted that

*International schools and centers, for example, CTY center, develop an appropriate environment for gifted students. They are able to select subjects and areas that they want to study... The teacher plays the role of motivator and scaffolder who might inspire the gifted student. It is important to develop conditions where the gifted student might realize himself.*

Moreover, Teacher M commented that:

*It is necessary to prevent underachievement rather than treat it. The first action is to reduce the number of compulsory subjects in the curriculum; it allows students to become autonomous learners. As a result, they become more flexible and do not feel pressure from the teachers and the educational program.*

All three respondents with international experience declared they believe that the school environment should be less restrictive and more encouraging.

Speaking of special strategies to support and eliminate underachievement among gifted students, respondents shared that there is not one universal approach or strategy that is the most suitable or beneficial. However, they believe that differentiation and individual support are the most favorable and preferred strategies. Moreover, respondents felt there is a need to collaborate with more experienced teachers to enrich their knowledge about strategies which might be applied to serve underachievers. Teacher N mentioned *"I need more practice and knowledge about how to work with gifted students especially underachievers. I have realized that I have a lack of knowledge in this sphere."*

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the analysis of the data collected from the semi-structured interviews. The data demonstrated that respondents have a general understanding of the phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted students. The main findings for research question one are the following: 1) A gifted underachiever is a student who has high abilities and potential in one sphere, however, shows low academic performance or low interest in another one; 2) There are common factors which influence

underachievement. Factors contributing to underachievement are individual factors such as motivation, self-regulation, and goal orientation. School-related factors include inconsistency between the school curriculum and the academic needs of gifted students, teacher instruction, and peer relationships. Family factors are parental involvement and divorce. The third question found that most teachers have a positive attitude toward underachieving students. The fourth research question revealed that differentiation and individual support are the most commonly applied strategies to improve low academic achievement among academically gifted students. However, respondents highlighted that they need to enrich their knowledge and apply other strategies to reduce underachievement.

The following Discussion Chapter will explore the main findings of this study in greater depth.

## **Chapter V: Discussion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the interpretation and discussion of findings with reference to the literature that was used to inform this study. The findings of the study are considered in the following sequence: (1) teachers' understanding of students' underachievement; (2) factors contributing to underachievement; (3) teachers' attitudes towards gifted underachievers; and (4) strategies teachers believe are useful to improve underachievement among gifted students.

**5.2 Understanding of the term underachievement among academically gifted students.** The first research question examines teachers' understanding of the phenomenon underachievement among academically gifted students. Teachers in this study have a shared understanding of the term gifted underachievement; however, they claimed that at the participating school there is no agreed definition for the term underachievement. Accordingly, they emphasized that the process of identification and serving underachievers can be complicated without a clear understanding of this concept. There is a plethora of research studies revealing the necessity of determining a specific definition which considers both local and cultural features (Heuser et al., 2017; Siegle & McCoach, 2009).

Most interview respondents classified the underachievement as a Discrepancy between Potential and Performance (Siegle & McCoach, 2010) which can be understood to be students with high intellectual capacity but students have poor academic performance. The common understanding of the central concept revealed that the teachers may collaborate with each other to better develop an appropriate environment and improved educational process (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; Redding, 1990; Rimm, 1997).

Even though the research studies discussed two additional categories of underachievement such as Predicted and Actual Achievements, and Promotion and Using Talent Potential; the respondents in this study did not mention either of these (Redding, 1990; Rimm, 1997). Scholars claimed that difference in interpretation of the same term is the result of the numerous definitions leading to the challenge in the identification of underachievers among the gifted population (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; National Association for Gifted Children website, 2017).

Moreover, having a specific definition of the phenomenon fosters the development of standardized methods for the identification of gifted underachievers in schools. The findings in this research revealed that the teachers are only using observation as a method of identification. However, Dowdall and Collangelo (1982) state that the results of the observation might not be credible due to bias against a student or other mitigating factors. Using only observation may mean that two teachers have differing opinions of the same student. Additionally, the researchers highlighted that identification should be multidimensional and reflect school goals and core values as well as cultural and local particularities (Passow et al., 1993).

Although the finding reveals a shared understanding of the phenomenon, this study has determined that the teachers require additional knowledge in order to look at the issue from the perspectives of the models of Discrepancy between Predicted and Actual Achievements, and Promotion and Using Talent Potential to include a more encompassing way to consider the phenomenon.

**5.3 Factors affecting gifted students' underachievement.** In this study common factors contributing to underachievement were raised by the teacher participants. According to the findings, the participants could identify several specific factors, which

were grouped into three categories: 1) individual factors such as motivation, self-regulation, and goal orientation 2) school-related factors including inconsistency between the school curriculum and the academic needs of gifted students, teacher's instructions, and peer relationships; 3) family factors of parental involvement and divorce. These factors have also been identified in other existing research studies (Baker, et al., 1998; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Jolly & Matthews, 2012; Zimmerman, 1990).

Based on the interview responses, teachers believe *motivation* to be the pivotal reason for underachievement. Additionally, some teachers specified intrinsically motivated students are able to determine and assess the actions needed to meet their needs and reach their potential. This finding is reflected in the Self-Determination Theory that emphasizes the vital role of intrinsic motivation in ability and potential development (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Other studies illustrate that motivated students might be involved in many activities and be more oriented to achieve high results (Phillips & Lindsay, 2006, Trevino & DeFreitas, 2014).

Overwhelmingly, all individual factors contributing to underachievement among academically gifted students are linked to motivation. Zimmerman (2013) declared that self-regulated students are motivated and active learners who understand and control their thinking process will set and accomplish their learning goals. It is important that respondents in this study realize that low self-regulation negatively impacts students' performance (Bandura, 1991).

Another interesting finding shows that lack of motivation means that students may look for the easiest way to accomplish the task rather than work to the best of their ability. The teachers stated that not being goal oriented is a fundamental factor leading to underachievement. Goal-oriented students strive to enrich their knowledge as a way to

further enhance their competence (Kaplan & Maehr, 2007). Consequently, students' ability to focus on the goals, prioritize and balance their activities will lead to higher achievements thus reducing academic failures.

Consequently, motivated students are able to regulate their way of acquiring knowledge and demonstrate goal orientation. This results in the unleashing and realization of the potential in students' learning.

The second significant set of factors influencing underachievement is **school factors**. It is well known, that students spend more time at school among teachers and peers in comparison with time at home with family. Consequently, school-related factors are very important and should be studied in-depth (Baker, et al., 1998). The respondents reported that students' needs are not always met because of some inconsistencies between provided educational services and students' needs.

One of the most influential factors determined by the teachers in this research is *an inconsistency between the school curriculum and the academic needs of gifted students*.

VanTassel-Baska (2000) stated

Yet what happens to a child in school should have a significant positive effect on the processes of learning. Gifted and talented students, like all students must have the right continuity of educational experience that meets their present and future academic needs. (p. 345)

The finding illustrates teachers' awareness of the mismatch between the school curriculum and the expectations and needs of the gifted population. Participants believe that the school curriculum is too overloaded with subjects and does not provide an opportunity to choose what really arouses some students' interest. It was stated that all subjects are compulsory, and it is the key cause of the underachievement as all students are

not equally interested in all subject areas. In turn, the studies demonstrate how different curriculum models for the gifted population better cater to individual needs and interests. Some models include enrichment and acceleration of the curriculum, while others might focus on the development of research capacity (Renzully, 1977; VanTassel-Baska, 2000). Hence, in order to reduce underachievement, it is suggested to consider the fact that while some students might be gifted in all domains others may be so in one only. Consequently, the curriculum should be developed or adjusted according to the needs of individual students, including gifted underachievers (Renzulli, 2014).

The second identified factor is *teacher's instruction*. The participants emphasized that not all teachers consider using differentiation as a teaching strategy thus using a one size fits all model might not be meeting the needs of some. Additionally, some students might be bored because of the way in which the curriculum is delivered or because of an inconsistency between the level of material and the student's level of knowledge (Kanevsky & Keighley, 2003). Consequently, teachers' concerns about the differentiated instruction are reasonable and it demonstrates that teachers realize that their actions have considerable influence on the low academic performance among some of the gifted population at this school.

The third category of factors is **family-related**. It is the most complicated set of factors contributing to underachievement. While the individual and school-related factors can be identified through observation and communication, families often hide or ignore the fact that they have problems that are impacting their children at school (Siegle & McCoach, 2010).

Moreover, respondents focused on the influence of *parental involvement* on the level of academic achievements. Scholars mentioned both positive and negative outcomes of parental involvement in the learning process (Renzulli & Park, 2000).

Respondents spoke about the inconsistency of children and parents' expectations leading to both high and low academic achievements. Respondents noted in some cases parents' expectations influenced the children's performance negatively as well as insensitivity to their performance. They concluded that it is an outcome of inappropriate support and understanding of the way of parenting gifted children. Rim and Lowe (1988) discussed the negative side of parents' expectations towards high achievements that lead to a change in behavior and academic performance as the result of children's rejection of parents' beliefs and confidence.

The research studies investigating parental involvement in gifted education support teachers' concern about lack of knowledge on how to maintain and develop abilities and potential of gifted students in order to prevent underachievement (Akkanat, Kutlu & Gokdere, 2015). Parents' awareness might be enriched through active collaboration with teachers who are able to show and explain how to provide appropriate support without pressure and negatively imposing their will on the children (Rim & Lowe, 1988).

All factors contributing to underachievement among academically gifted students in this study are corroborated by existing studies even though this is the first study on this topic in the Kazakhstani context.

**5.4 Teachers' attitudes towards gifted underachievers.** In order to understand how teachers perceive underachievement, the researcher also investigated their attitudes towards underachievers. Findings of the study demonstrate that 80% of participants have positive, or sympathetic attitudes towards gifted underachievers. Reviewed research

studies have also revealed that a teachers' attitude towards gifted students is more important to the student than professional competence, as initially gifted students evaluate personal traits of their teachers and their ability to provide a nurturing environment (David, 2011). Consequently, respondents believe that teachers with positive attitudes will tend to establish a beneficial environment and be more supportive.

The existing studies of teachers' attitudes reveal that students are very sensitive about any relationship. Therefore, they are able to easily recognize if teachers are interested in their well-being and achievements, or not. Gifted students might judge teachers' attitudes through conversation, tone of voice and gestures. Moreover, teachers' behavior during the lesson speaks about their positive or negative feelings toward their students (David, 2011). The participants' positive attitudes are seen in their responses because they spoke about underachievers with respect and sympathy. They showed that they understand that underachievers require different types of support. It is necessary to mention that despite two participants having negative attitudes towards gifted underachievement, no one declared that gifted underachievers should be excluded from the school because of their low performance or absence of interest in learning.

**5.5 Strategies to improve underachievement among gifted students.** The finding of the study reveals that teachers believe differentiation and collaboration with students are the main strategies that might prevent and support underachievers. It was unexpected to discover that the respondents are not familiar with other approaches or any school models or programs for gifted students aimed to improve underachievement.

However, the finding about *differentiation* was consistent with Rimm's (1997) Trifocal Model that illustrates the importance of applying differentiation in order to meet gifted students' needs. This approach is evaluated as the basic, the most suitable and

effective means for supporting students and lessening the phenomenon of underachievement. Also, the Schoolwide Enrichment Model reflects the beneficial influence of differentiation. It highlights the different types of differentiation: by support, by outcome, by tasks (Renzulli & Renzulli, 2010). In differentiated classrooms teachers should consider students' abilities and interests, ways of learning and perceptions of the information and then provide tasks and assessments at the appropriate level (Colangelo, Assouline & Gross, 2004). Thus, students become more engaged and motivated in their learning.

Also, respondents believe that *individual support* of students by teachers is a perfect basis for avoiding underachievement. It is assumed that face-to-face communication allows for the identification of the main causes of low performance. Moreover, the teacher and student might establish a friendly relationship that will ultimately have a positive impact on their learning. Existing research studies demonstrate that collaboration among stakeholders is the key component of the education programs developed for the gifted population (Renzulli & Renzulli, 2010; Rimm, 1997). The limited number of approaches applied by the teachers gives evidence that gifted underachievers are not fully provided with appropriate services, environment and support.

In line with the findings, it was unexpected to find out that teachers do not take part in professional development dealing with underachievement at this school. It testifies that teachers are currently not receiving appropriate support to enable them to better address this issue. However, teachers stated that international experience of some of the teachers might be transferred and implemented to improve their overall knowledge of underachievement in gifted students

## **5.6 Conclusion**

The findings were discussed in relation to international literature because of a lack of local studies. All findings are consistent with and reflected in existing research studies. The study demonstrates a shared understanding of the core phenomenon and the use of observation to identify underachievers. Also, this study identified the main factors contributing to underachievement in this school. The findings show teachers' positive attitudes towards gifted underachievers and pedagogical approaches that teachers believe might be implemented to improve underachievement. The following chapter will summarize this research study, discuss the implications, limitations and strengths of the study as well as provide recommendations for how this study has contributed to theory, policy and practice, and directions for further investigation.

## **Chapter VI: Conclusion**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the study aimed to explore teachers' understanding and perceptions of the phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted students, and teachers' beliefs how the issues of underachievement can be improved at one school in East Kazakhstan Region. It is organized as following: (a) summary of the study; (b) limitations and future research directions; (c) implications and recommendations.

### **6.2 Summary of the study**

This qualitative case study depicted that the issues of the underachievement among gifted students are crucial and not well-investigated in Kazakhstani schools. At the time of doing this research study there was not any local literature or research studies discussing phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted population.

The analysis of the semi-structured interviews demonstrated how respondents understood the term underachievement. Moreover, teachers expressed their positive attitudes toward gifted students dealing with underachievement and believe that applying the differentiated instruction and establishing collaboration with all stakeholders they might improve the issues relating to the underachievement. Also, the findings have shown common factors that influence academic achievements among gifted students.

However, it was unexpected to found out that teachers' knowledge about pedagogical approaches and practices for improving underachievement are limited. However, the respondents do understand that they need additional support in order to extend their understanding and knowledge of underachievement. They believe that well-organized work with the gifted population must include eliminating the phenomenon of

underachievement, enriching the intellectual capacity and raising the potential of gifted students who are considered a pivotal force of the future changes in this country (MES RK, 2010)..

### **6.3 Limitations and future research directions**

There are some limitations to the study. The first limitation concerns the instruments of investigation of the core issue. The semi-structured interview was chosen as the main instrument to collect the data for analysis. However, using different instruments in addition to the semi-structured interview would enable a more rigorous study related to underachievement. It is recommended to multiple tools for collecting evidence to analyze data and get a holistic picture of the investigated issue. This would allow a more in-depth exploration of teachers who are unfamiliar with the issues of underachievement. Moreover, the inclusion of quantitative data might be a good basis for changes in the school policy on gifted education and modification of school core values.

Secondly, the interview participants were chosen according to specific criteria. The interview participants were experienced teachers; this purposeful selection of participants did not allow for recruiting all categories of teachers in the study. Thus, not all voices were taken into consideration and analyzed and included in the findings due to small sample size.

In order to study the phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted students from different perspectives it is suggested to conduct the study including voices of gifted students. This would enrich the understanding about the factors influencing low performance and if students understand that they face troubles and challenges, as well as what the school community might attempt to support them. This would provide more

opportunity to compare teachers and students' perceptions and points of view on the issues related to gifted education.

#### **6.4 Implications and Recommendations**

The findings of this study can contribute to the development of a definition of the underachievement by the school community in order to include it in the school policy. It provides an opportunity to develop or adjust the tools that will identify gifted underachievers.

Moreover, this study allowed teachers to analyze their practice and knowledge about the work with gifted population and identify positive aspects of their teaching and the areas for improvement.

There are several recommendations suggested on the basis of the findings related to the stakeholders:

To the policy makers. The findings of the study revealed that a clear understanding of the core phenomenon is a basis for implementing tools to identify gifted underachievers. Moreover, it was discovered that teachers feel there has not been enough professional training, so they only have a limited understanding of approaches to prevent and remedy low academic achievement among the gifted population. Consequently, it is recommended to organize professional development or establish collaboration with international experts in gifted education as there is a lack of local specialists.

To the school administration. According to the findings, it was revealed that the teachers used only two pedagogical approaches to teach and support underachievers. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest the monitoring of the improvement of classroom practice with gifted students through lesson observation and personal communication with colleagues.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

75

To the teachers. It was identified that some teachers have expertise and capacity of teaching gifted underachievers and they are ready to translate their knowledge. In addition, it might be suggested to study additional sources to find other approaches that can be applied at school. Moreover, teachers might take part in the online webinars and trainings to enrich their knowledge on teaching gifted underachievers.

Having substantive knowledge of underachievement, teachers can better involve all stakeholders, especially parents, and demonstrate what actions should be taken to support children at home. In the future, the teachers will be able to collaborate with other local schools in order to demonstrate their practice and experience of work with underachievers. This small study is a beginning step to contributing to this very important issue from the Kazakhstani perspective.

### References

- Akkanat, Ç., Kutlu, N., & Gökdere, M. (2015). Turkish Gifted Children's Parents' Involvement. *Multidisciplinary Academic Conference on Education, Teaching and E-learning*.
- Baker, J. A., Bridger, R., & Evans, K. (1998). Models of underachievement among gifted preadolescents: The role of personal, family, and school factors. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 42(1), 5-15.
- Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of self-regulation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 248-287.
- Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press. (Reprinted in H. Friedman [Ed.], *Encyclopedia of mental health*. San Diego: Academic Press, 1998). Retrieved from <https://www.uky.edu/~eushe2/Bandura/Bandura1994EHB.pdf>
- Baum, S. M., Renzulli, J. S., & Hebert, T. P. (1995). The prism metaphor: A new paradigm for reversing underachievement (CRS95310). Storrs, CT: University of Connecticut, The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.
- Bennett-Rappell, H., & Northcote, M. T. (2016). Underachieving gifted students: Two case studies. *Issues in Educational Research*, 26 (3), 407-430. Retrieved from [https://research.avondale.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.ru/&httpsredir=1&article=1093&context=edu\\_papers](https://research.avondale.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.ru/&httpsredir=1&article=1093&context=edu_papers).
- Bicknell, B., (2014). Parental roles in the education of mathematically gifted and talented children. *Gifted Child Today*, 37, 83-93.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

77

- Blaas, S. (2014). The relationship between social-emotional difficulties and underachievement of gifted students. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools, 24*(2), 243-255.
- Boehnke, K. (2008). Peer pressure: A cause of scholastic underachievement? A cross-cultural study of mathematical achievement among German, Canadian, and Israeli middle school students. *Social Psychology of Education, 11*(2), 149-160.
- Borland, J. H., Schnur, R., & Wright, L. (2000). Economically disadvantaged students in a school for the academically gifted: A postpositivist inquiry into individual and family adjustment. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 44*(1), 13-32.
- Brualdi, A. C. (1996). Multiple Intelligences: Gardner's Theory. *ERIC Digest*. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED410226.pdf>
- Burdick, A. M. (2017). Gifted Students and Perfectionism. *Teaching for High Potential*. Retrieved from [http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Publication%20THP/THP\\_Spring\\_2017\\_GiftedStudentsAndPerfectionism.pdf](http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Publication%20THP/THP_Spring_2017_GiftedStudentsAndPerfectionism.pdf)
- Cassidy, J. (1981). Parental involvement in gifted programs. *Talents and Gifts, 4*(3), 284-287.
- Chere, N. E., & Hlalele, D. (2014). Academic underachievement of learners at school: A literature review. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 5*(23), 827.
- Christensen-Needham, V. (2010). *Primary Teachers' Perceptions of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Gifted and Talented Education: A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Teaching and Learning in the University of Canterbury* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Canterbury).

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

78

- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Routledge.
- Colangelo, N., & Davis, G. A. (2003). Introduction and overview. In N. Colangelo & G. A. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of gifted education* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Colangelo, N., Assouline, S. G., & Gross, M. U. (2004). A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students. The Templeton National Report on Acceleration. Volume 2. *Connie Belin & Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development (NJ1)*. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED535138.pdf>
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research. Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Harlow: Pearson.
- David, H. (2011). The importance of teachers' attitude in nurturing and educating gifted children. *Gifted and Talented International*, 26(1-2), 71-80.
- Davis, G. A., Rimm, S. B., & Siegle, D. (2010). *Education of the gifted and talented* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall
- Davis, G., & Rimm, S. (1998). *Education of the gifted and talented* (4th Ed). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Donald, D. R., Lazarus, S., & Lolwana, P. (2006). *Educational psychology in social context*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Cape town: Oxford University Press.
- Dowdall, C. B., & Colangelo, N. (1982). Underachieving gifted students: Review and implications. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 26(4), 179-184.
- Freeman, J. (2002). *Out-of-school educational provision for the gifted and talented around the world*. Report for the Department for Education and Skills (UK Government). London.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

79

Gagne (n.d.). *Gifted Underachievers*. Retrieved from

[https://www.education.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/587304/Gifted-Underachievers.pdf](https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/587304/Gifted-Underachievers.pdf)

Gagné, F. (1985). Giftedness and talent: Reexamining a reexamination of the definitions.

*Gifted Child Quarterly*, 29(3), 103-112.

Gagné, F. (2004). Transforming gifts into talents: The DMGT as a developmental theory.

*High ability studies*, 15(2), 119-147.

Gagné, F. (2007). Ten commandments for academic talent development. *Gifted Child*

*Quarterly*, 51(2), 93-118.

Gallagher, G. (2005). *Underachievement-How do we define, analyse, and address it in*

*schools?*. ACEpaper.

Gardner, H., & Hatch, T. (1989). Educational implications of the theory of multiple

intelligences. *Educational Researcher*, 18(8), 4-10.

Garn, A. C., Matthews, M. S., & Jolly, J. L. (2010). Parental influences on the academic

motivation of gifted students: A self-determination theory perspective. *Gifted Child*

*Quarterly*, 54(4), 263-272.

Glock, S., Kovacs, C., & Pit-ten Cate, I. (2018). Teachers' attitudes towards ethnic

minority students: Effects of schools' cultural diversity. *British Journal of*

*Educational Psychology*.

Gottfried, A. E., Fleming, J. S., & Gottfried, A. W. (2001). Continuity of academic

intrinsic motivation from childhood through late adolescence: A longitudinal

study. *Journal of educational psychology*, 93(1), 3-13.

Grubb, J., & Long, T. (2014). Parental Divorce and Student Academic Achievement.

- Ham, B. D. (2003). The effects of divorce on the academic achievement of high school seniors. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 38(3-4), 167-185.
- Heuser, B. L., Wang, K., & Shahid, S. (2017). Global Dimensions of Gifted and Talented Education: The Influence of National Perceptions on Policies and Practices. *Global Education Review*, 4(1), 4-21.
- Hoover-Schultz, B. (2005). Gifted underachievement: Oxymoron or educational enigma? *Gifted Child Today*, 28(2), 46-49.
- Ibabe, I. (2016). Academic failure and child-to-parent violence: family protective factors. *Frontiers in psychology*, 7, 1538.
- Jolly, J. L., & Matthews, M. S. (2012). A critique of the literature on parenting gifted learners. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 35, 259-290.
- Kanevsky, L., & Keighley, T. (2003). To produce or not to produce? Understanding boredom and the honor in underachievement. *Roeper Review*, 26(1), 20-28.
- Kaplan, A., & Maehr, M. L. (2007). The contributions and prospects of goal orientation theory. *Educational psychology review*, 19(2), 141-184.
- Kim, B. (2001). Social Constructivism. *Emerging perspectives on learning, teaching, and technology 1* (1), 16. Retrieved from <http://cmapsconverted.ihmc.us/rid=1N5QXBJZF-20SG67F-32D4/Kim%20Social%20constructivism.pdf>
- Lupart, J. L., & Pyryt, M. C. (1996). "Hidden gifted" students: Underachiever prevalence and profile. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 20, 36-53.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2012). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (Vol. 41). London, UK: Sage publications.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

81

- McCall, R. B., Evahn, C., & Kratzer, L. (1992). *High school underachievers: What do students. Leading change: they achieve as adults?* Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.
- McClelland, D. C., Atkinson, J. W., Clark, R. A., & Lowell, E. L. (1976). *The achievement motive*. New York: Appleton Century- Crofts.
- McCoach, D. B., & Siegle, D. (2003a). Factors that differentiate underachieving gifted students from high-achieving gifted students. *Gifted child quarterly*, 47(2), 144-154.
- McCoach, D. B., & Siegle, D. (2003b). The school attitude assessment survey-revised: A new instrument to identify academically able students who underachieve. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 63(3), 414-429.
- Miñano Pérez, P., Castejón Costa, J. L., Gilar Corbi, R., & Veas Iniesta, A. (2016). The SAAS-R: A new instrument to assess the school attitudes of students with high and low academic achievement in Spain. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 0748175616639106.
- Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2010). *State Program for Developing Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan 2011-2020*. Astana.
- Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan Republican Center "Preschool childhood". (2015) *Programma po organizacii raboty s odarennymi detmi [Program on Development of Work with Gifted Students]*. Astana
- Mofield, E. L., & Chakraborti-Ghosh, S. (2010). Addressing multidimensional perfectionism in gifted adolescents with affective curriculum. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 33(4), 479-513.
- Moltzen, R. (2004). Underachievement. *Gifted and talented: New Zealand perspectives*, 2,

371-400.

National Association for Gifted Children. (n.d.). Retrieved July 12, 2018, from

<http://www.nagc.org/>

Page, A. (2006). Three Models for Understanding Gifted Education. *Kairaranga*, 7(2), 11-15.

Passow, A. H., Mönks, F. J., & Heller, K. A. (1993). Research and education of the gifted in the year 2000 and beyond. In K. A. Heller, F.J. Mönks & A. H. Passow (Eds.), *International Handbook of Research and Development of Giftedness and Talent* (Vol. 1, pp. 883-903). Great Britain: BPC Wheatons Ltd, Exet.

Phillips, N., & Lindsay, G. (2006). Motivation in gifted students. *High Ability Studies*, 17(1), 57-73.

Pilarinos, V., & Solomon, C. R. (2017). Parenting styles and adjustment in gifted children. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 61(1), 87-98.

Pons, A., Amoroso, J., Herczynski, J., Kheyfets, I., Lockheed, M., & Santiago, P. (2015). *OECD Reviews of School Resources: Kazakhstan 2015*, OECD Publishing, Paris. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264245891-en>

Redding, R. E. (1990). Learning preferences and skill patterns among underachieving gifted adolescents. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 34(2), 72-75.

Reis, S. M. (2003). Reconsidering regular curriculum for high achieving students, gifted underachievers, and the relationship between gifted and regular education. *Rethinking gifted education*, 186-200.

Reis, S. M., & Greene, M. J. (2014). Using self-regulated learning to reverse underachievement in talented students. *Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development: University of Connecticut*. Retrieved from

[https://gifted.uconn.edu/schoolwide-enrichment-model/self-regulated\\_learning\\_reverse\\_underachievement/](https://gifted.uconn.edu/schoolwide-enrichment-model/self-regulated_learning_reverse_underachievement/)

- Reis, S. M., & McCoach, D. B. (2000). The underachievement of gifted students: What do we know and where do we go?. *Gifted child quarterly*, 44(3), 152-170.
- Renzulli, J. (2014). The schoolwide enrichment model: a comprehensive plan for the development of talents and giftedness. *Revista Educação Especial*, 27(50), 539-562.
- Renzulli, J. S., & Park, S. (2000). Gifted dropouts: The who and the why. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 44(4), 261-271.
- Renzulli, J. S., & Reis, S. M. (1985). The schoolwide enrichment model: A comprehensive plan for educational excellence. *Mansfield Center, CT: Creative Learning Press.*
- Renzulli, J. S., & Renzulli, S. R. (2010). The schoolwide enrichment model: A focus on student strengths and interests. *Gifted Education International*, 26(2-3), 140-156.
- Rimm, S. B. (1997). An underachievement epidemic. *Educational Leadership*, 54(7), 18-22.
- Rimm, S. B. (2008). *Why bright kids get poor grades and what you can do about it: A six-step program for parents and teachers.* Great Potential Press, Inc..
- Rimm, S., & Lowe, B. (1988). Family environments of underachieving gifted students. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 32(4), 353-359.
- Ritchotte, J. A., Suhr, D., Alfurayh, N. F., & Graefe, A. K. (2016). An exploration of the psychosocial characteristics of high achieving students and identified gifted students: Implications for practice. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 27(1), 23-38.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

84

- Ritchotte, J., Rubenstein, L., & Murry, F. (2015). Reversing the underachievement of gifted middle school students: Lessons from another field. *Gifted Child Today*, 38(2), 103-113.
- Roberts, S. M., & Lovett, S. B. (1994). Examining the "F" in gifted: Academically gifted adolescents' physiological and affective responses to scholastic failure. *Journal for The education of the Gifted*, 17, 241–259. doi:10.1177/016235329401700304
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78.
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers, 2nd Edition*. Singapore: Sage.
- Schüler, P. A. (2000). Perfectionism and the gifted adolescent. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*, 11, 183-196.
- Schultz, R. A. (2002). Understanding giftedness and underachievement: At the edge of possibility. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 46(3), 193-208.
- Siegle, D., & McCoach, D. B. (2005). Making a difference: Motivating gifted students who are not achieving. *Teaching exceptional children*, 38(1), 22-27.
- Siegle, D., & McCoach, D. B. (2009). Issues related to the underachievement of gifted students. *Leading change: The festschrift of Joyce VanTassel-Baska*, 195-206.
- Siegle, D., & McCoach, D. B. (2010). Redefining giftedness for a new century: Shifting the paradigm. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 22(1), 6-8.
- Speirs Neumeister, K. L., Williams, K. K., & Cross, T. L. (2009). Gifted high-school students' perspectives on the development of perfectionism. *Roeper Review*, 31(4), 198-206.

- Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Dornbusch, S. M., & Darling, N. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development, 63*, 1266-1281.
- Subban, P. (2006). Differentiated instruction: A research basis. *International education journal, 7*(7), 935-947.
- Tannenbaum, A. J. (1983). *Gifted children: Psychological and educational perspectives*. New York: Macmillan.
- Trevino, N. N., & DeFreitas, S. C. (2014). The relationship between intrinsic motivation and academic achievement for first generation Latino college students. *Social Psychology of Education, 17*(2), 293-306.
- Tsai, K. F., & Fu, G. (2016). Underachievement in Gifted Students: A Case Study of Three College Physics Students in Taiwan. *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 4*(4), 688-695.
- Ulug, M., Ozden, M. S., & Eryilmaz, A. (2011). The effects of teachers' attitudes on students' personality and performance. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 30*, 738-742.
- Van Tassel-Baska, J. (2000). Theory and Research on Curriculum Development. *International handbook of giftedness and talent, 345-365*.
- Vero, E., & Puka, E. (2017). The Importance of Motivation in an Educational Environment. *FORMAZIONE & INSEGNAMENTO. Rivista internazionale di Scienze dell'educazione e della formazione, 15*(1), 57-66.
- Vostrokolenkova, E.A. (2007). Teoriya i Praktika Raboty s Odarennymi Detmi v Inovatsionnyih Sotsiokulturnyih Usloviyah [Theory and Practice of Work with

Gifted Students in Innovative Socio-Cultural Conditions]. *Vestnik Natsionalnoy Akademii Nauk Respubliki Kazakhstan*, 1(1), 104-109.

Wang, K. T., Fu, C. C., & Rice, K. G. (2012). Perfectionism in gifted students: Moderating effects of goal orientation and contingent self-worth. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 27(2), 96.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). London and Singapore: Sage.

Zabloski, J., & Milacci, F. (2012). Gifted Dropouts: Phenomenological Case Studies of Rural Gifted Students. *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research*, 6(3).

Zimmerman, B. J. (1990). Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: An overview. *Educational psychologist*, 25(1), 3-17.

Zimmerman, B. J. (2013). Theories of self-regulated learning and academic achievement: An overview and analysis. In *Self-regulated learning and academic achievement* (pp. 10-45). London: Routledge.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

#### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

##### **Teachers' Perceptions of Underachievement among Academically Gifted Students at one School in East Kazakhstan Region**

**DESCRIPTION:** You are invited to participate in a research study on the exploration of teachers' understanding and perceptions of the phenomenon of underachievement among academically gifted students, and teachers' beliefs how the issues of underachievement can be improved. You will be asked to respond to the interview questions. If you agree the interview will be recorded on the Dictaphone. In case if you are against, there will be taken the notes. All information recorded during the interview will be anonymized. Your name will be coded or given pseudonyms to protect your identity. Your personal experience will not be evaluated and the data will be used to address the research questions only and not for other purposes. The results of the interview will be saved and kept on the researcher's laptop protected with the password and the access to the computer will have the researcher only. After analyzing the digital data, transcriptions and notes will be deleted.

**TIME INVOLVEMENT:** Your participation will take approximately 30 minutes.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** The risks associated with this study are minimal. If you feel stress or embarrassment responding to the questions, so you are allowed to miss the question or stop the interview. The benefit which may reasonably be expected to result from this study is analyzing the experience of work with underachievement that helps to identify strong and weak sides of the teaching and providing appropriate support for gifted students. It might lead to studying and implementation of new strategies to provide appropriate support for gifted students. Also, the findings of the research are beneficial for further investigations of the issue relating to the underachievement by the school staff in order to protect the school society from expelling gifted students. Then, the school might translate their experience and findings to any local schools to provide methodological support. It helps Kazakhstani teachers to be aware of the phenomenon. And, as a result, teachers from the state schools, who work with mixed abilities students, will be able to select appropriate approaches and arrange beneficial environment to satisfy students' needs. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your employment.

**PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS:** If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

88

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Questions:** If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, contact the Master's Thesis Supervisor for this student work, Dr. Janet Helmer, [janet.helmer@nu.edu.kz](mailto:janet.helmer@nu.edu.kz); Master student, Anastassiya Barkova, [anastassiya.barkova@nu.edu.kz](mailto:anastassiya.barkova@nu.edu.kz), +77751389020

**Independent Contact:** If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to at [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz)

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.**

**ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫ КЕЛІСІМІНІҢ АҚПАРАТТЫҚ ФОРМАСЫ**

**Шығыс Қазақстан облысының бір мектебіндегі мұғалімдердің дарынды оқушылардың академиялық төмен көрсеткіш көрсетуін түсінуі.**

**СИПАТТАМА:** Сіздерді академиялық көрсеткіші төмен дарынды балалар туралы мұғалімдердің қалай қабылдайтынын зерделейтін зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға шақырамыз. Сіз сұхбат сұрақтарына жауап беруге шақырыласыз. Егер Сіз келіссеңіз, сіздің сұхбатыңыз таспаға жазылады. Сұхбат кезінде жазылған барлық ақпарат құпия болып саналады. Сіздің анонимдігіңізді кепілдендіру үшін мен сізге код немесе бүркеншік ат беремін. Мен сіздің жұмыс тәжірибеңізді бағаламаймын және жиналған барлық деректер тек қана осы зерттеуде қолданылатын болады. Сұхбат деректері парольмен қорғалған мендегі дербес компьютерде сақталады. Талдаудан кейін барлық жазбалар мен деректер электрондық тасымалдағыштан жойылады.

**ӨТКІЗІЛЕТІН УАҚЫТЫ:** Сіздің қатысуыңыз шамамен 30 мин уақытыңызды алады.

**ЗЕРТТЕУ ЖҰМЫСЫНА ҚАТЫСУДЫҢ ҚАУІПТЕРІ МЕН**

**АРТЫҚШЫЛЫҚТАРЫ:** Зерттеуге байланысты тәуекелдер аз. Егер сіз қандай да бір сұраққа жауап бермегендіктен немесе жауап бергіңіз келмесе, сіз сұхбатқа қатысудан бас тарта аласыз. Зерттеу жұмысының пайдалылығы ретінде сіз төменгі академиялық үлгерімі бар дарынды балалармен тәжірибеңізді талдау мүмкіндігін қарастыра аласыз, бұл өз кезегінде оқытудың күшті және әлсіз жақтарын анықтауға және дарынды балаларға қалай қолдау көрсетуге болатынын анықтауға мүмкіндік береді. Бұл дарынды балаларға оқытудың жаңа әдістерін зерттеуге және енгізуге әсер етуі мүмкін. Бұдан басқа, зерттеудің нәтижелері мектептегі мәселені одан әрі зерделеу үшін дарынды оқушылардың төмен академиялық көрсеткіштерімен байланысты, оларды мектептен шығаруға жол бермеу үшін пайдалы. Мектеп үлгерімі төмен дарынды балаларды оқыту тәжірибиесін басқа мектептерге академиялық үлгерімі төмен дарынды балаларды жетістікке жеткізу үшін тиімді жұмыс жасай алады. Бұл Қазақстандық мұғалімдерге дарынды балалар арасында академиялық төмен көрсеткіштер көрсету қатерінің құбылысымен танысуға көмектеседі. Нәтижесінде, оқушылардың әртүрлі қабілеттерімен жұмыс істейтін мемлекеттік мектептердің мұғалімдері ыңғайлы тәсілдерді таңдап, оқушылардың қажеттіліктерін қанағаттандыру үшін қолайлы орта құра алады. Осы зерттеуге қатысу немесе қатыспау туралы шешім сіздің жұмысыңызға әсер етпейді.

**ҚАТЫСУШЫ ҚҰҚЫҚТАРЫ:** Егер Сіз берілген формамен танысып, зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға шешім қабылдасаңыз, Сіздің қатысуыңыз ерікті түрде екенін хабарлаймыз. Сонымен қатар, қалаған уақытта айыппұл төлемей және сіздің әлеуметтік жеңілдіктеріңізге еш кесірін тигізбей зерттеу жұмысына қатысу туралы келісіміңізді кері қайтаруға немесе тоқтатуға құқығыңыз бар. Зерттеу жұмысына мүлдем қатыспауыңызға да толық құқығыңыз бар. Сондай-ақ, қандай да бір сұрақтарға жауап бермеуіңізге де әбден болады. Бұл зерттеу жұмысының нәтижелері

академиялық немесе кәсіби мақсаттарда баспаға ұсынылуы немесе шығарылуы мүмкін.

**БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТЫ:**

**Сұрақтарыңыз:** Егер жүргізіліп отырған зерттеу жұмысының процесі, қауіп мен артықшылықтары туралы сұрағыңыз немесе шағымыңыз болса, келесі байланыс құралдары арқылы зерттеушімен хабарласуыңызға болады. Ғылыми жетекші: Джанет Хелмер, [janet.helmer@nu.edu.kz](mailto:janet.helmer@nu.edu.kz); зерттеуші: Анастасия Баркова, [anastassiya.barkova@nu.edu.kz](mailto:anastassiya.barkova@nu.edu.kz), +77751389020

**ДЕРБЕС БАЙЛАНЫС АҚПАРАТТАРЫ:** Егер берілген зерттеу жұмысының жүргізілуімен қанағаттанбасаңыз немесе сұрақтарыңыз бен шағымдарыңыз болса, Назарбаев Университеті Жоғары Білім беру мектебінің Зерттеу көрсетілген байланыс құралдары арқылы хабарласуыңызға болады: электрондық поштамен [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz).

Зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға келісіміңізді берсеңіз, берілген формаға қол қоюыңызды сұраймыз.

- Мен берілген формамен мұқият таныстым;
- Маған зерттеу жұмысының мақсаты мен оның процедурасы жайында толық ақпарат берілді;
- Жинақталған ақпарат пен құпия мәліметтерге тек зерттеушінің өзіне қолжетімді және мәлім болатынын толық түсінемін;
- Мен кез келген уақытта ешқандай түсініктемесіз зерттеу жұмысына қатысудан бас тартуыма болатынын түсінемін;
- Мен жоғарыда аталып өткен ақпаратты саналы түрде қабылдап, осы зерттеу жұмысына қатысуға өз келісімімді беремін.

Қолы: \_\_\_\_\_

Күні: \_\_\_\_\_

### **ФОРМА ИНФОРМАЦИОННОГО СОГЛАСИЯ**

#### **Как учителя одной из школ Восточно-Казахстанской Области воспринимают академически одаренных учеников с низкой успеваемостью**

**ОПИСАНИЕ:** Вы приглашены принять участие в исследовании по изучению того, как учителя понимают и воспринимают академически одаренных учеников с низкой успеваемостью, а также убеждены учителей в том, как можно улучшить низкую успеваемость. Вам предлагается принять участие в интервью. С Вашего согласия интервью будет записано на диктофон. Если Вы не согласны на диктофонную запись, во время интервью я буду конспектировать ваши ответы. Вся информация, записанная во время интервью, будет конфиденциальной. Чтобы гарантировать Вам анонимность я присвою Вам код или псевдоним. Я не буду оценивать опыт Вашей работы, и все собранные данные будут использоваться в рамках данной исследовательской работы. Данные, собранные во время интервью, будут храниться на персональном компьютере под защитой пароля доступ, к которому имеется только у меня. После проведения анализа все записи и данные будут удалены.

**ВРЕМЯ УЧАСТИЯ:** Ваше участие потребует около 30 мин.

**РИСКИ И ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА:** Риски, связанные с исследованием, минимальны. Если Вы будете чувствовать неуверенность или нежелание отвечать на какой-либо из вопросов, то Вы можете пропустить вопрос или отказаться от участия в интервью. В качестве ожидаемых преимуществ в результате исследования можно рассматривать возможность проанализировать ваш опыт работы с одаренными детьми с низкой успеваемостью, что в свою очередь поможет Вам выявить сильные и слабые стороны вашего преподавания и того, как вы оказываете поддержку одаренным детям. Это может повлиять на изучение и внедрение новых методов в преподавании для одаренных детей. Кроме того, результаты исследования полезны для дальнейшего изучения проблемы внутри школы, связанной с низкой успеваемостью одаренных учеников для того, чтобы предотвратить их исключения из школы. Школа может транслировать свой опыт и результаты работы с одаренными детьми с низкой успеваемостью в другие школы, чтобы обеспечить методологическую поддержку. Это поможет Казахстанским учителям ознакомиться с феноменом академической неуспеваемости среди одаренных детей. И, как результат, учителя из государственных школ, которые работают со студентами разных способностей, смогут выбрать подходящие подходы и организовать благоприятную среду для удовлетворения потребностей учащихся. Ваше решение, участвовать или нет в этом исследовании, не повлияет на вашу работу.

**ПРАВА УЧАСТНИКОВ:** Если Вы прочитали данную форму и решили принять участие в данном исследовании, Вы должны понимать, что Ваше участие является добровольным и что у Вас есть право отозвать свое согласие или прекратить участие в любое время без штрафных санкций и без потери социального пакета, который Вам предоставляли. В качестве альтернативы можно не участвовать в исследовании. Также Вы имеете право не отвечать на какие-либо вопросы. Результаты данного

исследования могут быть представлены или опубликованы в научных или профессиональных целях.

**КОНТАКТНАЯ ИНФОРМАЦИЯ:**

**Вопросы:** Если у Вас есть вопросы, замечания или жалобы по поводу данного исследования, процедуры его проведения, рисков и преимуществ, Вы можете связаться с научным руководителем Профессором Джанет Хелмер, [janet.helmer@nu.edu.kz](mailto:janet.helmer@nu.edu.kz); исследователем (студентом-магистрантом): Анастасией Барковой, [anastasiya.barkova@nu.edu.kz](mailto:anastasiya.barkova@nu.edu.kz), +77751389020

**Независимые контакты:** Если Вы не удовлетворены проведением данного исследования, если у Вас возникли какие-либо проблемы, жалобы или вопросы, Вы можете связаться с Комитетом Исследований Высшей Школы Образования Назарбаев Университета, отправив письмо на электронный адрес [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz).

Пожалуйста, подпишите данную форму, если Вы согласны участвовать в исследовании.

- Я внимательно изучил представленную информацию;
- Мне предоставили полную информацию о целях и процедуре исследования;
- Я понимаю, как будут использованы собранные данные, и что доступ к любой конфиденциальной информации будет иметь только исследователь;
- Я понимаю, что вправе в любой момент отказаться от участия в данном исследовании без объяснения причин;
- С полным осознанием всего вышеизложенного я согласен принять участие в исследовании по собственной воле.

Подпись: \_\_\_\_\_

Дата: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**

**INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

**Project title:** TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

Time of interview:

Date:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Age:

Gender:

School subject:

Years of work experience with gifted students:

Dear Participant,

My name is Anastassiya Barkova. I am a master degree student at Nazarbayev University.

And I would like to ask you some questions.

I really appreciate that you have found the time to participate the interview that is the part of my master's program in Nazarbayev University. Your responses will help to study teachers' perception of underachievement among academically gifted students and study the experience of improvement the low academic achievement. Do you mind if I record our conversation?

During the interview I might ask additional questions in order to clarify your answer or get additional information. In case if the interview questions are unclear you may ask clarification.

There are some procedures that we need to follow during the interview:

- 1) Please turn off your mobile phone;
- 2) Speak loudly as the conversation is recorded.

Do you have any questions? If you are ready we may start

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:**

- 1) What challenges in teaching gifted students do you have?
- 2) Have you ever taught gifted students with low academic achievements?
- 3) How do you understand the concept of underachievement?
- 4) Could you name common factors affecting gifted students' underachievement at your school?
- 5) Could you give a definition for the gifted underachiever at your school?
- 6) Are there any instruments to identify gifted underachievers at your school? How are gifted underachievers identified at your school?
- 7) How do you think the school could be more accurately identify gifted underachievers?
- 8) How do you feel about gifted students with low academic achievements at your school?
- 9) Are you familiar with the international guidelines / strategies for working with gifted underachievers? If yes, tell what you know.

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

95

10) Could you share your practices of teaching gifted students with low academic achievements?

11) What is your suggestion for improving the support and services provided for the gifted students at your school?

- Thank you for participation in the interview.

### ПРОТОКОЛҒА СҰХБАТ

**Жоба атауы:** Шығыс Қазақстан облысының бір мектебіндегі мұғалімдердің дарынды оқушылардың академиялық төмен көрсеткіш көрсетуін түсінуі.

Уақыты:

Күні:

Зерттеуші:

Респондент:

Жасы:

Жыны:

Пән:

Дарынды балалармен жұмыс тәжірибесі:

Құрметті мүшесі,

Менің атым - Анастасия Баркова. Мен Назарбаев Университетінің магистр. Мен сіздерге бірнеше сұрақ қойғым келеді.

Назарбаев Университетіндегі магистрлік бағдарламаның бөлігі болып табылатын әңгімелесуге қатысуға уақыт бөлгеніңізді шынымен ризамын. Сіздің жауаптарыңыз мұғалімдердің академиялық дарынды оқушылар арасында төмен академиялық өнімділік феноменін, сондай-ақ төмен академиялық көрсеткіштерді жақсарту тәжірибесін зерттеуге көмектеседі. Мені диктофонға сұхбат жазсам, ойланасыз ба?

Сұхбат кезінде мен сізден қосымша сұрақтарды сұрап, қосымша ақпараттар алу үшін қосымша сұрақтар қоя аласыз. Егер сұхбаттасу сұрақтарын түсінбесеңіз, түсініктеме беруді сұрай аласыз.

Сұхбат кезінде ұстану керек бірнеше ережелер бар:

- 1) Ұялы телефонды өшіріңіз;
- 2) Әңгіме жазғышта жазылғандықтан, нақты және қатты сөйлеңіз. Сізде қандай да бір сұрақ бар ма?

Егер дайын болсаңыз, біз бастай аламыз.

#### **СҰРАҚТАР:**

- 1) Сіздің мектептегі дарынды балалармен жұмыс істеу кезіндегі негізгі мәселелері қандай?
- 2) Сіздің тәжірибеңіз бойынша үлгерімі нашар дарынды оқушылар болды ма?
- 3) Дарынды балалардың арасында төмен академиялық өнімділік құбылысын қалай түсінесіз?
- 4) Сіздің мектептегі дарынды оқушылардың үлгерімсіздігіне әсер ететін ең көп тараған факторларды атаңыз.
- 5) Өз сөздеріңізбен мектептегі үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушы кім екенін анықтаңыз.
- 6) Сіздің мектепте үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушыларды қалай анықтайды? Анықтау үшін қандай да бір құралдар (әдістер және т. б.) бар ма?
- 7) Үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушыларды нақты анықтау үшін не жақсарту қажет деп ойлайсыз?
- 8) Мектептегі академиялық үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушыларға қалай қарайсыз?

- 9) Сіз дарынды үлгермейтін оқушылармен жұмыс істеудің халықаралық тәжірибесімен (стратегиялар, әдістемелер, қолдау жоспарлары және т. б.) таныссыз ба? Егер иә болса, онда сіз олар туралы не білесіз?
- 10) Үлгерімі төмен дарынды оқушыларды оқытудағы өз тәжірибеңізді айтып беріңізші? (Егер мұндай бар болса)
- 11) Сіздің мектептегі дарынды оқушыларды қолдау және өзіңіздің жұмысыңызды жетілдіру бойынша ұсыныстарыңыз қандай?

Сұхбатқа қатысқаныңыз үшін рахмет.

**ПРОТОКОЛ ИНТЕРВЬЮ**

**Название Проекта:** КАК УЧИТЕЛЯ ОДНОЙ ИЗ ШКОЛ ВОСТОЧНО-  
КАЗАХСТАНСКОЙ ОБЛАСТИ ВОСПРИНИМАЮТ АКАДЕМИЧЕСКИ  
ОДАренных УЧЕНИКОВ С НИЗКОЙ УСПЕВАЕМОСТЬЮ

Время:

Дата:

Исследователь:

Респондент:

Возраст:

Пол:

Предмет:

Опыт работы с одаренными детьми:

Уважаемый участник интервью,

Меня зовут Анастасия Баркова. Я, студентка магистратуры Назарбаева

Университета. Я хочу задать вам несколько вопросов. Я очень ценю, что вы нашли

время для участия в интервью, которое является частью моей магистерской

программы в Назарбаев Университете. Ваши ответы помогут изучить восприятие

учителями феномена низкой успеваемости среди академически одаренных учеников,

а также опыт по улучшения низкой успеваемости. Не возражаете, если я буду

записывать наше интервью на диктофон?

Во время интервью я могу задать Вам дополнительные вопросы, чтобы уточнить

ваш ответ или получить дополнительную информацию. В случае, если Вам будут

непонятны вопросы интервью Вы можете попросить разъяснения. Есть несколько правил, которые нам необходимо соблюдать во время интервью:

- 1) Выключите свой мобильный телефон;
- 2) Говорите четко и громко, так как разговор записывается на диктофон.

У вас есть вопросы? Если вы готовы, мы можем начать

### **ВОПРОСЫ**

- 1) Расскажите об основных проблемах при работе с одаренными детьми в вашей школе.
- 2) Были ли на вашей практике одаренные учащиеся, имеющие проблемы с успеваемостью?
- 3) Как вы понимаете термин академическая неуспеваемость?
- 4) Назовите наиболее распространенные факторы, влияющие на неуспеваемость одаренных учеников в вашей школе.
- 5) Пожалуйста, своими словами дайте определение кто такой - одаренный ученик с низкой успеваемостью в вашей школе.
- 6) Как в вашей школе выявляют одаренных учеников с низкой успеваемостью? Существуют ли какие-нибудь инструменты (методы, приемы и т.д.) для выявления?
- 7) Как вы думаете, что необходимо улучшить для более точного выявления одаренных учеников с низкой успеваемостью в вашей школе?
- 8) Как вы относитесь к одаренным ученикам с низкой успеваемостью в вашей школе?

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG  
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS AT ONE SCHOOL IN EAST KAZAKHSTAN  
REGION

101

- 9) Знакомы ли вы с международным опытом (стратегии, методики, планы поддержки и т.д.) работы с одаренными неуспевающими учениками? Если да, то могли бы вы рассказать, что вы о них знаете?
- 10) Расскажите о своей практике обучения одаренных учеников с низкой успеваемостью? (Если такой имеется)
- 11) Каковы ваши предложения по улучшению работы и поддержки одаренных учеников в вашей школе?

Спасибо за участие в интервью.

### Appendix C

#### Data Sample: Part of Transcription

**The researcher:** *How old are you?*

**Teacher 1:** *50*

**The researcher:** *What subject do you teach?*

**Teacher 1:** *IT*

**The researcher:** *How long have you been teaching gifted students?*

**Teacher 1:** *- 15 years*

**The researcher:** *What challenges in teaching gifted students do you have?*

**Teacher 1:** *I face with common problems working with both gifted and general population. Both gifted and general population might demonstrate high and low achievements. However, the real reasons for underachievement among gifted students might differ from regular students. For instance, a gifted student might have high capabilities only in one domain such as IT, this student always wins prizes on the national level, but, at the same time, he might demonstrate low academic achievements on other subjects. Firstly, it might be because the student is not interested in other subjects. Secondly, the reason is time management, for example, the student might spend a lot of time doing the exercises or solving the IT problems and has a lack of time for other subjects. I evaluate the mention above as the main problems working with gifted students.*

**The researcher:** *Have you ever taught gifted students with low academic achievements?*

**Teacher 1:** *Of course, I had several students who were brilliant in my subject and had poor performance in social science. For example, I had a student who won the first place on the republican level, but some of his final projects were assessed on the satisfactory mark.*

**The researcher:** *How do you understand the concept of underachievement?*

**Teacher 1:** *Academic underachievement is defined on the base of the students' grades (marks). Underachievement is satisfactory or unsatisfactory grades. For example, if students' final grades are satisfactory, consequently they might be evaluated as underachievers.*

**The researcher:** *Could you name common factors affecting gifted students' underachievement at your school?*

**Teacher 1:** *I am sure that motivation is the core factor. If a student is motivated and interested in one sphere he might be less motivated to learn other subjects. This student might spend all his time learning the issues of his interest and does not do anything on other subjects, consequently it leads to underachievement. Secondly, teachers might make mistakes selecting inappropriate way of teaching and serving gifted students. If they identify that student has challenges, they should use differentiation during their lessons in order to meet student's needs. However, it is time-consuming and teachers do not always take into consideration students' the academic level, interests or individual features when they plan their lessons. Therefore, these are the main reasons for underachievement at our school.*