

## **Social Studies Teachers' Attitudes Towards Gifted Education: Diverging Perspectives**

**Fatih Pala**

**Oltu Science and Art Center, Erzurum, Turkey**

### **Abstract**

This study aims to identify social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students and gifted education, as well as to uncover distinct attitude profiles among them. The research employs a quantitative survey design. Data were collected using a standardized attitude scale administered to 250 social studies teachers across Turkey. The data were analyzed using factor analysis to determine the underlying dimensions and latent profile analysis (LPA) to identify distinct teacher attitude profiles. The analysis revealed three distinct profiles: a positive attitude profile, a moderate attitude profile, and a low attitude profile. These profiles demonstrate the diversity in teachers' attitudes toward gifted students. The findings offer valuable guidance for the development and implementation of more effective educational policies and practices targeting gifted students in social studies education. Furthermore, the study highlights the need to design support programs tailored to different teacher attitude profiles. Such initiatives could contribute to improving the quality of education for gifted students and promoting equity in educational opportunities.

**Keywords:** Social studies education, gifted students, teacher attitudes, typology

### **Introduction**

In today's world, where 21st-century skills are gaining increasing importance, educational approaches that consider individual differences have become a central priority in education systems (Fraser et al., 2024; Tomlinson, 2017). In this context, designing learning environments that cater to students' interests, abilities, and learning styles not only enhances academic achievement but also supports self-actualization and active participation in society. Providing an inclusive and supportive educational environment, particularly for gifted

students, is of critical importance for ensuring educational equity (Pfeiffer, 2015; Renzulli, 2021). However, one of the main challenges these students face in educational settings is the occasional inadequacy of teachers in developing positive attitudes toward them (Allday et al., 2013; Pemberton, 2024).

At this point, the determining role of teacher attitudes comes to the forefront. Teachers' beliefs and attitudes directly influence their classroom practices, thereby shaping the educational experiences and academic development of gifted students. Given the interdisciplinary and values-based nature of the social studies curriculum, this subject offers significant opportunities for developing higher-order skills such as critical thinking, civic engagement, empathy, and leadership (Banks, 2008; Wineburg, 2010). Therefore, understanding social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students is a critical requirement both for enhancing the quality of instruction and for evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive education practices. A review of the literature shows that while there is a considerable body of research on the education of gifted individuals, most of these studies focus on subject areas such as science, mathematics, and language (McCoach & Siegle, 2007; Peters et al., 2021). Empirical findings regarding the attitudes of social studies teachers remain limited and are often addressed only superficially within the broader context of general teacher attitudes. Yet, as a multifaceted learning domain encompassing not only cognitive development but also affective, social, and ethical dimensions, social studies education holds significant potential to contribute to the holistic development of gifted learners (Callahan & Hertberg-Davis, 2012; Hebert, 2021). In this respect, identifying social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students and exploring the underlying factors behind these attitudes is not only important for analyzing the current situation but also for informing the development of more effective teacher training programs and education policies. The central research problem of this study revolves around the attitudes that social studies teachers hold toward gifted students and the individual or

professional factors influencing these attitudes. Revealing teachers' perceptions and approaches to this student group is considered a key variable that may directly affect classroom practices, as well as the learning motivation, academic success, and educational satisfaction of gifted students (Moon & Brighton, 2008).

The primary aim of this study is to examine the attitudes of social studies teachers in Turkey toward gifted students and to determine how these attitudes relate to teachers' demographic characteristics (gender, age, seniority), professional experience, and prior training in gifted education. Identifying the variables significantly associated with teacher attitudes will make it possible to develop concrete suggestions for restructuring teacher education programs and for planning in-service training based on actual needs. In this way, the study not only fills an empirical gap but also aims to provide a knowledge base to guide educational practice. While previous studies have examined general teacher attitudes toward gifted individuals, systematic research focusing specifically on social studies teachers remains scarce. Moreover, existing studies often lack in-depth analysis of the causes and consequences of teacher attitudes and rarely incorporate content-specific perspectives.

## **Theoretical Framework and Related Research**

### **Theories of Giftedness**

Understanding and defining giftedness plays a fundamental role in determining approaches and strategies for the education of gifted students. Renzulli's (2011) Three-Ring Conception of Giftedness defines giftedness as the interaction among three essential components: above-average ability, task commitment, and creativity. According to this model, giftedness is not solely defined by high intelligence; rather, it emerges from the concurrent presence of motivation and creativity. Renzulli argues that educational environments should be designed to foster the development of these three traits to maximize students' potential (Renzulli, 2011;

Renzulli, 2021). In this regard, social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students are crucial for supporting both cognitive and motivational aspects of their development.

Gagné's (2004) Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT) conceptualizes giftedness as the transformation of natural abilities (e.g., intelligence, creativity, leadership) into outstanding performance through systematic education and environmental support.

According to Gagné, the educational process for gifted individuals involves stages of talent identification and development, in which teachers play a central role (Gagné, 2004; Gagné, 2010). Supportive learning environments, positive teacher attitudes, and sufficient pedagogical expertise are key determinants in nurturing giftedness. Thus, these theoretical models necessitate an examination of teachers' attitudes and approaches to effectively support gifted students in social studies classes. They also underscore the need for individualized and multidimensional instructional programs tailored to gifted learners. Moreover, the extent to which teachers internalize and apply these theories directly influences the quality of students' learning experiences.

### **Teacher Attitudes and Their Role in Education**

Teacher attitudes are recognized as a crucial psychosocial factor in the instructional process, particularly in shaping interactions with students. Pajares (1992) emphasizes that teacher attitudes significantly influence their beliefs, expectations, and behaviors, which in turn affect students' academic achievement and motivation. In the context of gifted education, teacher attitudes can shape the opportunities and barriers gifted students encounter in educational settings (Cross, 2021). Research has shown that positive teacher attitudes toward gifted students enhance their self-confidence and academic motivation, while negative attitudes can lead to underachievement and a loss of potential (Subotnik et al., 2011; Festman, 2023). Teachers' understanding of gifted students has a direct impact on the instructional strategies they adopt. With the rise of inclusive education, teacher attitudes have gained even more

importance, and sensitivity to diverse learner profiles has become a central component of professional development programs (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). Studies focusing on gifted education reveal that teachers who lack sufficient knowledge and experience tend to hold less favorable attitudes, while professional development or in-service training specific to gifted education can positively influence their perceptions (McCoach & Siegle, 2007; Bicakci, 2024).

### **Social Studies Teachers' Approaches to Gifted Learners**

Social studies education, by its interdisciplinary nature, integrates cognitive, social, ethical, and affective dimensions, making it a fertile ground for the holistic development of gifted students (Banks, 2008; Wineburg, 2010). The subject aims to foster critical thinking, civic responsibility, ethical awareness, and leadership—skills that are highly relevant for gifted learners to fully express their potential. However, studies specifically investigating social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students remain scarce. The international literature suggests that social studies teachers generally exhibit moderate attitudes toward giftedness, often constrained by limited pedagogical preparation and awareness (Moon & Brighton, 2008; Rinn, 2021). In the Turkish context, research indicates that many social studies teachers lack sufficient sensitivity and pedagogical competence regarding the individual differences of gifted students (Bolat, 2020; Doğrukök, 2022).

This situation highlights the challenges field-specific teachers face in designing and implementing effective educational strategies for gifted learners. Improving teacher attitudes is essential for developing and applying appropriate instructional methods that address the unique needs of gifted students. Identifying the factors that influence teacher attitudes is therefore critical for the design of both preservice and in-service teacher training programs (VanTassel-Baska & Baska, 2021; Hebert, 2021).

### **Rationale for the Theoretical Approach in Light of Related Studies**

The conceptualization and educational treatment of giftedness are explained through multifaceted theoretical perspectives in the literature, which also offer an essential framework for understanding teacher attitudes. Relying solely on general theories of teacher attitudes is insufficient for analyzing social studies teachers' perceptions of giftedness. Instead, discipline-specific frameworks that incorporate the cognitive, affective, and environmental dimensions of gifted education are required (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2008; Subotnik et al., 2011).

Accordingly, Renzulli's Three-Ring Model (Renzulli, 2011; Boothe & Stanley, 2004) and Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (Gagné, 2004; Gagné, 2010) constitute the theoretical foundation of this study. Renzulli defines giftedness as the intersection of above-average ability, creativity, and task commitment, while Gagné emphasizes the role of internal and external factors in transforming talent into competence. These two approaches enable an analysis of teacher attitudes that encompasses not only academic performance but also the psychosocial processes influencing student potential. Teacher attitudes directly affect students' learning motivation, self-perception, and academic development (Rubie-Davies, 2010; Siegle & McCoach, 2005). However, existing research shows that teachers—particularly in the social studies field—often hold neutral or negative attitudes toward gifted learners, due to insufficient pedagogical knowledge, lack of differentiated instructional strategies, and limited classroom practices (McCoach & Siegle, 2007; Peterson, 2009). For example, McCoach and Siegle (2007) found that teachers frequently perceive gifted students as challenging or problematic, which negatively impacts the instructional process. Similarly, Rinn (2021) highlights the direct relationship between teacher attitudes and the content of professional development programs.

This study aims to examine social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students by taking into account the unique nature of the discipline and how differentiated instruction is perceived in this context. In doing so, it seeks to offer evidence-based recommendations for making teacher education and professional development programs more responsive to the needs of gifted learners. Given the value-based, multiperspective, and critical-thinking-oriented nature of social studies education, the question of how gifted learners can be effectively supported in this subject area emerges as a significant topic of inquiry at both theoretical and practical levels (Winebrenner, 2001; Tomlinson, 2017).

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a survey design to examine social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students. Survey models are among the quantitative research methods that allow for the description of the current state of a given phenomenon and the analysis of relationships among variables (Büyüköztürk et al., 2018). This design provides an appropriate framework for identifying different dimensions of teachers' attitudes and constructing their attitude profiles.

### **Study Group**

The study group consisted of 250 social studies teachers working across various regions of Turkey. The sample was selected using a stratified sampling method from teachers working at different educational levels (middle and high school) in various provinces. This method ensured the representation of different regions and levels, thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Participants demonstrated diversity in terms of age, gender, years of professional experience, educational background, and previous training related to gifted education. This diversity allowed for the analysis of how teachers' attitudes vary across different contexts.

### **Data Collection Instrument**

To collect data, a scale either originally developed or adapted with established validity was used to measure social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students. The scale was structured based on theories of giftedness and previous research, encompassing dimensions such as attitudes toward giftedness, attitudes toward educational and support services, and social-emotional needs of gifted students (e.g., Moon & Brighton, 2008; Rinn, 2021). Expert opinion was first sought to ensure content validity, followed by a pilot study. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was then conducted on the pilot data to examine the structure of the scale, and items that were irrelevant or inconsistent were removed. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) was found to be above 0.85, indicating high reliability.

### **Data Analysis Methods**

The collected data were analyzed using quantitative analysis techniques.

#### ***Factor Analysis***

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to determine the dimensions of the scale and its construct validity. This analysis aimed to identify the clusters of items under each dimension and to validate the underlying structure of the scale (Field, 2024). Factor loadings of 0.40 and above were considered significant, indicating that the item is meaningfully associated with the respective factor. The number of factors was determined based on the eigenvalue criterion and scree plot analysis.

#### ***Latent Profile Analysis (LPA)***

Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) was employed to identify distinct subgroups in teachers' attitudes toward gifted students. LPA is a type of mixture model that uncovers unobserved profiles (classes) based on multiple observed variables and is commonly used to define homogeneous subgroups of individuals with similar characteristics (Collins & Lanza, 2009). This analysis categorizes attitudes not as a single continuum but as multi-dimensional



constructs, allowing for the identification of different attitude profiles. As a result, the distribution of attitudes within homogeneous groups and their characteristic features are revealed. Based on LPA results, it becomes possible to tailor educational approaches and design targeted professional development programs for each teacher group. Model fit was evaluated using statistical criteria such as the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), entropy, and the Lo-Mendell-Rubin adjusted likelihood ratio test (Nylund et al., 2007). The most appropriate model was selected based on its statistical and theoretical interpretability.

## Findings

**Table 1.** Factor Loadings and Distribution of Scale Items

Item No	Item Content	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
1	I am sensitive to the special needs of gifted students.	0.72	0.64
2	I use differentiated materials for gifted students in social studies classes.	0.68	0.59
3	Working with gifted students enhances my professional development.	0.74	0.62
4	It is important to support the motivation of gifted students.	0.65	0.57
5	I pay special attention to the social development of gifted students.	0.69	0.61
6	Educational programs for gifted students are inadequate.	0.52	0.49

Item No	Item Content	Factor Loading	Item-Total Correlation
7	I use appropriate teaching strategies for gifted students.	0.77	0.66
8	Support services should be provided at schools for gifted students.	0.82	0.68
9	The emotional needs of gifted students should not be ignored.	0.70	0.60
10	Teachers need training to work effectively with gifted students.	0.75	0.63

To examine the structure of the attitude scale developed to measure social studies teachers' attitudes toward gifted students, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted. The analysis revealed that the scale had a three-factor structure, which explained 62.4% of the total variance. The factor loadings ranged between 0.52 and 0.82, and the internal consistency of the scale was found to be 0.89 (Cronbach's Alpha). These values indicate that the scale is both valid and reliable.

**Table 2.** Scale Factors and Explained Variance

Factor No	Factor Name	Explained Variance (%)	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Teachers' Attitudes Toward Gifted Students	28.3	4	0.87
2	Attitudes Toward Educational and Support Services	21.1	3	0.85

<b>Factor No</b>	<b>Factor Name</b>	<b>Explained Variance (%)</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
3	Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted Students	13.0	3	0.81
<b>Total</b>		<b>62.4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0.89</b>

As a result of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), it was determined that the scale measuring teachers' attitudes toward gifted students consisted of three main factors. These factors explain 62.4% of the total variance, which is considered quite acceptable for psychological measurement tools. In addition, the internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) of the factors range from 0.81 to 0.87, indicating that the scale is reliable.

- **First Factor: Teachers' Attitudes Toward Gifted Students**

This factor accounts for 28.3% of the total variance and consists of four items. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.87 demonstrates a high level of reliability. This factor strongly reflects teachers' general attitudes and perceptions toward gifted students.

- **Second Factor: Attitudes Toward Educational and Support Services**

This factor, comprising three items, explains 21.1% of the total variance and has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.85, indicating high reliability. It reflects teachers' attitudes toward the educational and psychosocial support services provided for gifted students.

- **Third Factor: Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted Students**

This factor includes three items, accounts for 13.0% of the variance, and has an acceptable Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.81. It measures teachers' awareness of and attitudes toward the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

**Table 3.** Comparison of Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) Results

Number of Profiles	AIC	BIC	Entropy
2	1450.32	1495.67	0.82
3	1380.85	1443.10	0.88
4	1365.20	1444.36	0.85

As shown in the table, the AIC, BIC, and Entropy values were compared for models with different numbers of profiles. When evaluating model fit indices, it was observed that AIC and BIC values decreased as the number of profiles increased, with the lowest values found in the four-profile model. This suggests that model fit improves as the number of profiles increases. However, in terms of Entropy, the highest value (0.88) was observed in the three-profile model. Entropy measures the clarity of classification and the distinctiveness of the profiles; hence, a higher entropy value indicates more reliable classification. Considering these results, it can be stated that the three-profile model offers the most appropriate solution by balancing model fit and classification accuracy. Although the four-profile model showed improved fit, the decrease in entropy suggests that the profiles became less distinct. Additionally, increased model complexity may hinder interpretability. Therefore, continuing the analysis based on the three-profile model is deemed more appropriate for the purpose of the study. Accordingly, teachers' attitudes toward gifted students were classified into three distinct profiles, and each profile was defined based on the average scores.

**Table 4.** Mean Scores According to Teacher Attitude Profiles

Profile No	Mean Attitude Score	Profile Summary
1	4.35	Positive Attitude Profile
2	3.10	Moderate Attitude Profile
3	2.15	Low Attitude Profile



**Figure 1.** Average Score Graphs According to Teacher Attitude Profiles

Tables 4 and Figure 1 present the average scores of teachers' attitudes toward gifted students based on three different profiles, along with summaries of these profiles according to their scores. The first profile is named the "Positive Attitude Profile," with an average score of 4.35, indicating that teachers in this group hold highly positive and supportive attitudes toward gifted students. This group represents teachers who have a high level of awareness regarding the education of gifted individuals and exhibit a positive approach to meeting these students' needs.

The second profile, identified as the "Moderate Attitude Profile," has an average score of 3.10, showing that teachers' attitudes toward gifted students are neither completely positive

nor negative, but rather neutral or undecided. The attitudes of teachers in this group are open to development and can be improved with appropriate training.

The third profile, termed the "Low Attitude Profile," has an average score of 2.15, indicating generally negative or insufficient attitudes toward gifted students. These teachers may have less awareness of the needs of this student group or may find it difficult to demonstrate supportive attitudes.

These results reveal the diversity of attitudes among social studies teachers toward gifted students and highlight the necessity of training programs aimed at increasing awareness particularly among teachers in the moderate and low attitude profiles. Educational policies and professional development initiatives targeted based on these profiles can contribute to creating an inclusive and supportive educational environment.

**Table 5.** Distribution of Profiles by Demographic Characteristics (%)

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Profile 1 (%)</b>	<b>Profile 2 (%)</b>	<b>Profile 3 (%)</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>
Age 20-30	35	40	25	100
Age 31-40	40	35	25	100
Age 41 and above	45	30	25	100
Female	42	38	20	100
Male	38	36	26	100
Received gifted education	55	30	15	100
Did not receive gifted education	30	45	25	100

Table 5 shows the percentage distribution of the three different attitude profiles according to teachers' demographic characteristics. This distribution reveals which groups tend to fall into which attitude profiles more frequently.

Looking at age groups, 45% of teachers aged 41 and above belong to the "Positive Attitude Profile," while this rate is somewhat lower in younger age groups (35% in the 20-30 range and 40% in the 31-40 range). This suggests that positive attitudes toward gifted students may increase with experience. There are no major differences across age groups in the moderate and low attitude profiles.

Regarding gender, 42% of female teachers have a positive attitude profile, while this rate is slightly lower among male teachers at 38%. Additionally, the proportion of male teachers in the low attitude profile (26%) is somewhat higher than that of female teachers (20%), indicating that female teachers tend to show somewhat more positive attitudes toward gifted students.

The status of having received gifted education emerges as one of the most decisive variables. Among teachers who have received gifted education, 55% fall under the "Positive Attitude Profile," whereas only 30% of those who have not received such education do so. Moreover, 45% of teachers without gifted education are classified in the "Moderate Attitude Profile," and 25% fall into the low attitude profile. These data clearly demonstrate the significant impact of gifted education on developing positive attitudes in teachers.

Overall, while demographic features like age and gender have some effect on teachers' attitude profiles, receiving gifted education has a stronger and more pronounced impact on attitudes. This finding emphasizes the importance of expanding gifted education in professional development programs.

**Table 6.** Differences Between Attitude Profiles Based on Length of Professional Experience

Professional Experience	Profile 1 Mean	Profile 2 Mean	Profile 3 Mean	p-value
0-5 years	3.8	3.2	2.1	<0.05
6-10 years	4.1	3.3	2.3	

<b>Professional Experience</b>	<b>Profile 1 Mean</b>	<b>Profile 2 Mean</b>	<b>Profile 3 Mean</b>	<b>p-value</b>
11 years and above	4.5	3.8	2.5	

Table 6 shows the average scores of teacher attitude profiles by length of professional experience, along with the statistical significance of differences among these groups.

The table shows that as professional experience increases, the average scores in the “Positive Attitude Profile” also increase. For instance, teachers with 0-5 years of experience have a positive attitude average of 3.8, which rises to 4.5 among those with 11 or more years of experience. Similarly, for the “Moderate Attitude Profile,” average scores increase from 3.2 to 3.8 with experience. In the “Low Attitude Profile,” there is a slight increase in scores with experience (from 2.1 to 2.5), but the overall scores remain lower compared to other profiles. The p-value of  $<0.05$  indicates statistically significant differences between professional experience groups regarding teacher attitude profiles toward gifted students. In other words, the length of professional experience significantly affects teachers’ attitudes toward gifted students.

In conclusion, attitudes become more positive with increased experience, suggesting that more experienced teachers better understand and support the needs and potential of gifted students. This finding also points to the need for more intensive training and mentoring programs for novice teachers.

## **Conclusion**

The Social Studies Teachers’ Attitude Scale towards Gifted Students developed in this study revealed a three-factor structure through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). These three factors explained 62.4% of the total variance, and the internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach’s Alpha) ranged between 0.81 and 0.87, demonstrating the scale’s reliability. The factors encompassed teachers’ general attitudes towards gifted individuals, their perceptions



of educational and support services, and their awareness of social-emotional needs. According to the Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) results, teachers' attitudes were classified into three profiles: Positive Attitude Profile, Moderate Attitude Profile, and Low Attitude Profile. Based on model fit indices (AIC, BIC) and entropy values, the three-profile model was identified as the best fit. Differences between the profiles were associated with teachers' demographic characteristics and professional experience, with participation in gifted education programs emerging as a key determinant in attitude formation. Higher proportions of teachers with positive attitudes were observed among older and female teachers, and positive attitudes significantly increased with greater professional experience. These findings support the necessity of targeted professional development programs aimed at improving teachers' attitudes towards gifted students and emphasize the importance of expanding gifted education training within such programs.

Firstly, the finding that teachers' attitudes towards gifted students have a multidimensional and factorial structure aligns with previous research in the field of gifted education (Rinn & Bishop, 2015; Matheis, 2019). Particularly, this study's evaluation of teachers' attitudes in both general perception and educational/support service dimensions parallels the results of Jung and Lee (2024). Similarly, treating social-emotional needs as a separate factor supports Ford and Grantham's (2003) emphasis on the emotional needs of gifted students. The high factor loadings and internal consistency values of the scale items (Cronbach's Alpha ranging from 0.81 to 0.87) comply with the accepted standards for validity and reliability in the literature (Taber, 2018), indicating that the developed scale effectively measures teachers' attitudes towards gifted students in a valid and reliable manner.

The three attitude profiles identified in the profile analysis (Positive, Moderate, Low) are consistent with previous studies. For instance, Borland (2005) and VanTassel-Baska and Baska (2021) reported that teachers' attitudes towards gifted students vary widely and

highlighted the critical role of professional experience and training in developing positive attitudes. The greater inclusion of teachers who received gifted education training in the positive attitude profile supports the beneficial impact of professional development on attitudes (Almazán, 2023). Regarding demographic variables, findings that age and gender influence attitude differences find partial support in the literature. Experienced teachers tend to exhibit more positive attitudes towards gifted students (Cross & Cross, 2021), and female teachers appear to be more sensitive to social-emotional needs (Davis & Colangelo, 1997), which is consistent with the results of this study. Lastly, the significant effect of professional experience on attitudes aligns with educational psychology literature that posits experience as a determinant in the maturation of teacher attitudes (Santos & Miguel, 2019).

In this context, the findings of this research suggest that expanding professional experience and specialized training programs is essential to foster more positive attitudes among teachers towards gifted students.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study make a significant contribution to the literature by revealing that teachers' attitudes towards gifted students are multidimensional and complex in nature.

Previous studies have also indicated that teacher attitudes should be examined not merely as a general perception but across various dimensions such as educational approaches, sensitivity to social-emotional needs, and overall attitudes (Pfeiffer, 2015; Subotnik et al., 2011). The multi-factor structure of the scale developed in this research enabled a more comprehensive assessment of teachers' attitudes toward gifted students, thereby introducing an innovative measurement tool to the literature. The results showed that teachers' professional experience and participation in gifted education positively influenced their attitudes. This outcome aligns with prior studies emphasizing the importance of professional development programs in education (Jung & Lee, 2025; Davis & Rimm, 1989). In this context, increasing teachers'

knowledge and awareness regarding gifted students positively changes their attitudes, thereby enabling students to benefit more effectively from educational processes. Moreover, this highlights the need for education policies and teacher training programs to strengthen their gifted education content (Johnsen & VanTassel-Baska, 2023).

The impact of demographic variables on teacher attitudes is also frequently emphasized in the literature (Plucker & Callahan, 2008). For example, factors such as teachers' gender, seniority, and educational background have been shown in various studies to shape attitudes toward gifted students (Carayannis, 2020). This underscores the necessity of developing differentiated professional development strategies tailored to teachers' individual characteristics and needs. The multidimensional attitude structure identified in this study allows for a more detailed understanding of the diverse attitudes and perceptions teachers may exhibit in their interactions with gifted students in practice. Identifying teachers' strengths and weaknesses facilitates the design of targeted awareness-raising and development programs (Neihart, 2021). Additionally, such comprehensive attitude analyses guide the development of educational models tailored to the individual needs of gifted students (Borland, 2005).

The limitations of the study should also be discussed. Since the research was limited to social studies teachers, investigating attitudes of teachers from different subject areas is important for future contributions to the field (Subotnik et al., 2011). Furthermore, complementing quantitative data with qualitative research methods would help achieve a deeper and contextual understanding of teachers' attitudes (Patton, 2002). In conclusion, this study offers an original contribution by enabling the comprehensive and multidimensional evaluation of teachers' attitudes towards gifted students. This contribution enriches theoretical knowledge in gifted education and provides concrete data to inform improvements in educational policies and practices. In an era where inclusivity and individual differences are increasingly important in education, such research sheds light on teachers' professional development

processes and the enhancement of educational environments (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2006).

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it is of great importance to expand professional development programs for social studies teachers. Teacher training programs should strengthen special education content to increase sensitivity toward the social-emotional needs of gifted students. Additionally, considering the different attitude profiles identified in the research, awareness-raising and attitude development initiatives should be planned specifically for teachers exhibiting moderate and low attitude levels. Taking into account the influence of demographic factors such as age and gender on attitudes, it is recommended to personalize professional development programs accordingly. Educational administrators should also develop guidance and counseling mechanisms that positively support teachers' attitudes toward gifted students. Finally, future research should examine attitudes of teachers from different subject areas and employ qualitative methods for an in-depth analysis of these attitudes to further contribute to the field.

### **Limitations**

This study has several limitations. First, as the research was limited to social studies teachers, the findings cannot be generalized to teachers from other subject areas. Additionally, the data collection relied solely on self-report questionnaires, which carries the risk of responses being influenced by social desirability bias. The cross-sectional design of the study prevented the examination of attitude changes over time. Moreover, the demographic distribution of the participants may include imbalances in the representation of some groups. Lastly, the region and cultural context in which the study was conducted should be taken into account when interpreting the results.

### **References**

- Allday, R. A., Neilsen-Gatti, S., & Hudson, T. M. (2013). Preparation for inclusion in teacher education pre-service curricula. *Teacher education and special education*, 36(4), 298-311.
- Almazán, D. A. (2023). Influence of Gifted Instructional Strategies on Gifted Children's Perceptual Reasoning: A Quasi-Experimental, Nonequivalent Group Comparison Study.
- Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: a review of the literature. *European journal of special needs education*, 17(2), 129-147.
- Banks, J. A. (2008). Diversity, group identity, and citizenship education in a global age. *Educational researcher*, 37(3), 129-139.
- Bicakci, M. (2024). Bridging the missing link on giftedness and underachiever labels research: Embracing symbolic interactionism. In *Essential Issues in Symbolic Interaction*, 59, 29-67.
- Bolat, H. (2020). Üstün zekalı ve yetenekli öğrencilerin bilim ve sanat merkezindeki ve okuldaki sosyal bilgiler dersine yönelik metaforik algıları. *Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 8(4), 1135-1144.
- Boothe, D. E., & Stanley, J. C. (2004). *In the eyes of the beholder: Critical issues for diversity in gifted education*. Prufrock Press Inc..
- Borland, J. H. (2005). Gifted education without gifted children. *Conceptions of giftedness*, 1-19.
- Büyüköztürk, Ş., Kılıç Çakmak, E., Akgün, Ö. E., Karadeniz, Ş., & Demirel, F. (2018). *Eğitimde bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri*. Pegem Akademi.
- Callahan, C. M., & Hertberg-Davis, H. L. (Eds.). (2012). *Fundamentals of gifted education*. Oxford, UK: Routledge.
- Carayannis, E. G. (Ed.). (2020). *Encyclopedia of creativity, invention, innovation and entrepreneurship*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

- Collins, L. M., & Lanza, S. T. (2009). *Latent class and latent transition analysis: With applications in the social, behavioral, and health sciences*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Cross, T. L. (2021). *On the social and emotional lives of gifted children*. Routledge.
- Cross, T. L., & Cross, J. R. (Eds.). (2021). *Handbook for counselors serving students with gifts and talents: Development, relationships, school issues, and counseling needs/interventions*. Routledge.
- Davis, G. A., & Colangelo, N. (Eds.). (1997). *Handbook of gifted education*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Davis, G. A., & Rimm, S. B. (1989). *Education of the gifted and talented*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Doğrükök, B. (2022). *Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerine uygulanan farklılaştırma eğitiminin öğretmenlerin ve özel yetenekli öğrencilerin becerileri üzerine etkilerinin incelenmesi* (Doctoral dissertation, Necmettin Erbakan University (Turkey)).
- Festman, J. (2023). Gifted Early Readers' Health Development And Well-Being: A Survey On Teachers' Attitudes, Beliefs, Knowledge And Pedagogical Practices In The Regular Classroom. *Medical Research Archives*, 11(8).
- Field, A. (2024). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*. Sage publications limited.
- Florian, L., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2011). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *British educational research journal*, 37(5), 813-828.
- Ford, D. Y., & Grantham, T. C. (2003). Providing access for culturally diverse gifted students: From deficit to dynamic thinking. *Theory into practice*, 42(3), 217-225.
- Fraser, P., Ordenes, M., Orrego, V., Uribe, M., & Weinstein, J. (2024). The professionalization of school leadership in Latin America: A review of eight educational systems.

- Gagné, F. (2004). Transforming gifts into talents: The DMGT as a developmental theory. *High ability studies*, 15(2), 119-147.
- Gagné, F. (2010). Motivation within the DMGT 2.0 framework. *High ability studies*, 21(2), 81-99.
- Hébert, T. P. (2021). *Understanding the social and emotional lives of gifted students*. Routledge.
- Johnsen, S. K., & VanTassel-Baska, J. (2023). Curriculum-Based Assessment for Advanced Learners. In *Content-Based Curriculum for Advanced Learners* (pp. 239-266). Routledge.
- Jung, J. Y., & Lee, J. (2024). Teacher Attitudes Toward Gifted Students and Gifted Education: The Typologies of Attitudes and Their Predictors. *Exceptional Children*, 91(1), 74-92.
- Jung, J. Y., & Lee, J. (2025). The Attitudes of the General Student Body Toward Gifted Students and Gifted Education: Attitude Profiles and Predictors. *Psychology in the Schools*.
- Kaufman, S. B., & Sternberg, R. J. (2008). Conceptions of giftedness. In *Handbook of giftedness in children: Psychoeducational theory, research, and best practices* (pp. 71-91). Boston, MA: Springer US.
- Matheis, S. (2019). *Teacher beliefs about giftedness—examining and explaining teacher beliefs about gifted students' characteristics in an experimental design* (Doctoral dissertation, Universität Koblenz-Landau, Campus Landau).
- McCoach, D. B., & Siegle, D. (2007). What predicts teachers' attitudes toward the gifted?. *Gifted child quarterly*, 51(3), 246-254.
- Moon, T. R., & Brighton, C. M. (2008). Primary teachers' conceptions of giftedness. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 31(4), 447-480.
- Neihart, M. (2021). *The social and emotional development of gifted children: What do we know?*. Routledge.

- Nylund, K. L., Asparouhov, T., & Muthén, B. O. (2007). Deciding on the number of classes in latent class analysis and growth mixture modeling: A Monte Carlo simulation study. *Structural equation modeling: A multidisciplinary Journal*, 14(4), 535-569.
- Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of educational research*, 62(3), 307-332.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (Vol. 3). Sage.
- Pemberton, J. A. (2004). *Identifying and serving gifted students with learning disabilities: challenges and the influence of the school context*. Miami University.
- Peters, S. J., Matthews, M. S., McBee, M. T., & McCoach, D. B. (2021). *Beyond gifted education: Designing and implementing advanced academic programs*. Routledge.
- Peterson, J. S. (2009). Myth 17: Gifted and talented individuals do not have unique social and emotional needs. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 53(4), 280-282.
- Plucker, J. A., & Callahan, C. M. (2008). *Critical issues and practices in gifted education: What the research says*. Prufrock Press Inc..
- Pfeiffer, S. I. (2015). *Essentials of gifted assessment*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Renzulli, J. S. (2011). What makes giftedness?: Reexamining a definition. *Phi delta kappan*, 92(8), 81-88.
- Renzulli, J. S. (2021). The three-ring conception of giftedness: A developmental model for promoting creative productivity 4. In *Reflections on gifted education* (pp. 55-90). Routledge.
- Rinn, A. (2021). *Social, emotional, and psychosocial development of gifted and talented individuals*. Routledge.
- Rinn, A. N., & Bishop, J. (2015). Gifted adults: A systematic review and analysis of the literature. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 59(4), 213-235.
- Rubie-Davies, C. M. (2010). Teacher expectations and perceptions of student attributes: Is there a relationship?. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 80(1), 121-135.



- Santos, D., & Miguel, L. (2019). The Relationship between Teachers' Beliefs, Teachers' Behaviors, and Teachers' Professional Development: A Literature Review. *International Journal of education and practice*, 7(1), 10-18.
- Siegle, D., & McCoach, D. B. (2005). Making a difference: Motivating gifted students who are not achieving. *Teaching exceptional children*, 38(1), 22-27.
- Subotnik, R. F., Olszewski-Kubilius, P., & Worrell, F. C. (2011). Rethinking giftedness and gifted education: A proposed direction forward based on psychological science. *Psychological science in the public interest*, 12(1), 3-54.
- Taber, K. S. (2018). The use of Cronbach's alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education. *Research in science education*, 48, 1273-1296.
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2017). *How to differentiate instruction in academically diverse classrooms*. Ascd.
- VanTassel-Baska, J., & Baska, A. (2021). *Curriculum planning and instructional design for gifted learners*. Routledge.
- VanTassel-Baska, J., & Stambaugh, T. (2006). Comprehensive curriculum for gifted learners. *(No Title)*.
- Winebrenner, S. (2001). Teaching gifted kids in the regular classroom. *Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit*.
- Wineburg, S. (2010). Historical thinking and other unnatural acts. *Phi delta kappan*, 92(4), 81-94.