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“STUDENT VOICE”

Perceptions of the
Gifted Kids Programme Alumni

2000-2007

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degree of

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ABSTRACT

Whilst there is some international research available regarding withdrawal programmes and out-of-school options for gifted students, there is little information internationally or nationally surrounding a withdrawal model that students can attend over an extended period, nor information that details the perspectives of the participants involved. This case study explored the effectiveness of a nationwide New Zealand out-of-school gifted education provider. It investigated the experiences and perceptions of 174 students who had attended the Gifted Kids Programme (GKP), during their primary and/or intermediate schooling.

The purpose of the study was to gain insight into the effectiveness of this provision by measuring how the goals advocated by the Gifted Kids Programme were perceived by the students who were involved in the programme, and to determine the value students placed on these goals both during and after their involvement in the programme. Data was collected through an online questionnaire and follow-up focus group sessions.

The key finding of this study was that attending the Gifted Kids Programme was perceived to be of great value to the students who participated in the research. The research indicates students had positive experiences which stimulated both cognitive and affective growth. It shows that this one-day-a-week programme has provided a research-based and appropriately differentiated programme for the participants. Themes of self-confidence, opportunity, talent, challenge and like-minded peers arose from the student responses. The findings provide validation for the Gifted Kids Programme as a provider of gifted education within a continuum of provisions. It also demonstrates the importance of using students' perceptions to inform educational provisions.

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