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Multiple intelligences and psychological well-being among gifted students in Hong Kong

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PROPOSAL:

In a review of giftedness, Winner (2000) concluded that "we need to intervene for the happiness and mental health of gifted students", so that "they can become our future leaders and innovators" (p. 166). Consequently, it is particularly relevant for educators and researchers to understand the relationship between giftedness and psychological well-being among gifted students.

Ryff's (1989) multidimensional model of psychological well-being (PWB) provides an integrated framework for investigating students' positive functioning, as the six key dimensions of PWB reflect various aspects of thriving and flourishing. However, to date, limited research attention has been paid to the relationship between giftedness and PWB, and existing empirical evidence remains nebulous. This might have to do with the fact that many of the past studies used measures based mostly on standard intelligence test scores, which may not reflect the wider spectrum of intelligences such as social and emotional intelligences.

The present study aimed to bridge the gap in the literature through investigating the relationship between multiple intelligences (MI) and PWB in a group of gifted students in Hong Kong. Apart from evaluating the extent to which each PWB dimension could be predicted by specific intelligences within the MI framework, this study also examined the potential mediating role of general self-efficacy in the MI-PWB relationship. In addition, it also investigated whether the strength of the mediated relationship was influenced by students' gender and grade level (primary grades vs. secondary grades).

From a total of 2309 students from 20 primary and secondary schools, we selected a sample of 318 gifted students based on their scores on the Raven's Test. Raven's Test was used as the selection criteria because it is regarded as one of the best tests that provide a measure that reflects general intelligence (Spearman's "g" factor). These gifted students completed a battery of questionnaires. Results indicated that in predicting the six PWB dimensions,

intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences emerged as the most important predictors. In addition, general self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship between person-related (intrapersonal and interpersonal) intelligences and PWB. The strength of the mediated relationship did not differ across gender but differed across grade level. Our findings highlighted the importance of helping gifted students develop self-reflection or self-management skills, relational or people skills, as well as self-efficacy to ensure that they experience high levels of psychological well-being and that their potential can be fully realized.

ABSTRACT:

This study examined the relationship between multiple intelligences (MI) and psychological well-being (PWB) among a group of gifted students in Hong Kong. 318 gifted students were selected from 2309 students from 20 primary and secondary schools based on students' scores on the Raven's Test. Regression analyses showed that in predicting the six PWB dimensions, intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences emerged as the most important predictors. Structural equation modeling analyses showed that general self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship between person-related (intrapersonal and interpersonal) intelligences and PWB. The strength of the mediated relationship did not differ across gender but differed across grade level.

KEYWORDS:

general self-efficacy, gifted students, Hong Kong, psychological well-being, multiple intelligences