

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GIFTED EDUCATION QUALITY STANDARDS

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Abstract

What define gifted students has not been agreed globally neither their education quality standards. This article aims to identify similarities and difference between gifted quality standards in different countries based on their purposes, structure and contents. A total of 10 standards have been examined. Two countries – England and the US – have updated and published revised standards. The other four – the Netherlands, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia and Wales – have each produced a single edition. All standards were available in the English language, which makes comparison possible. The result found similarities as well as difference between the examined standards. The study suggest, for a universal standards to be achieved, they must allow sufficient scope to meet varying perspectives of experts (practitioners and academics) and circumstances, support divergent interpretation, promote innovation and allow for changes to the paradigm and the wider policy context and priorities over time.

Keywords: Gifted education, Quality standards, Comparison.

Introduction:

In the 21st century, “it is impossible to talk about teaching, curriculum, schools, or education without discussing standards” (Susan R. Rakow, 2008. P.1). The standards movement has grown exponentially since 1983, when the National Commission on Excellence in Education published *A Nation at Risk* (Stedman, L. C., 1994). Struggling for schools equal educational opportunity has encouraged the movement toward standardization (McClure, 2005). It starts as a simple task of defining an adequate education in student content standards. Yet, it sets other aspect of schooling such as professional requirements for teachers and for professional in-service training. The British Standards Institute (2016) has defined a standard as:

‘A published document that contains a technical specification or other precise criteria designed to be used consistently as a rule, guideline or definition. Standards help to make life simpler and to increase the reliability and the effectiveness of many goods and services we use. They are a summary of best practice...’

The definition above has shown the importance of standards in aligning inputs and processes in achieving the desired outcomes, in addition to ensuring appropriate quality and reliability of a product or a service. They can be used to evaluate and compare the products, processes and/or services in education context.

Research literature has identified seven common usages of quality: quality as resources and inputs, quality as process, quality as content, quality as outputs and outcomes, and quality as ‘value-added’ (Adams, 1997, p. 2-5). Similarly, UNICEF (2000) highlights a similar set of issues in a recent paper on educational quality in which it defines quality in terms of five dimensions (content, processes, outcomes in addition to learners, and environments). These categories of standards, however, are interdependent and shown to be included in various gifted standards.

As countries tried to figure out how to meet the needs of the gifted, some countries set their own quality standards for gifted education. Johnsen, VanTassel-Baska, and Robinson (2008) highlighted the

importance of gifted quality standards as it helps to capture, clearly and concisely, all the elements of effective practice in gifted education; and so equip all stakeholders with a common language to describe effective practice, so they can communicate effectively with each other within a country. Quality standards were also used

to determine if schools and students were successful (McClure, 2005).

The following map shows the historical development of gifted education quality standards and their geographical spread. All are available in the English language, which makes comparison possible.



The American National Association for Gifted Children was among the first to set gifted education standards in 1998 (Landrum, Callahan, & Shaklee, 2001). They have developed standards for giftedness education at school and district level. The standards provide six criteria in seven areas; including: program design, program administration and management, student identification, curriculum and instruction, socio-emotional guidance and counseling, professional development, and program evaluation. It applied the following principles:

- Standards should encourage but not dictate approaches of high quality;

- Standards represent requisite programme outcomes and standards for excellence;
- Standards establish the level of performance to which all educational school districts and agencies should aspire;
- Standards represent professional consensus on critical practice in gifted education that almost everyone is likely to find acceptable;
- Standards are observable aspects of educational programming and are directly connected to the continuous growth and development of gifted learners.

In 2007, the NAGC Board created the Professional Standards Committee to align the 1998 Gifted Program Standards with the NAGC-CEC Teacher Preparation Standards.

The major differences between the 1998 Gifted Program Standards and the 2010 Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards center on the following areas: 1. The revised programming standards focus on student outcomes. 2. The revised programming standards reflect a stronger emphasis on diversity. 3. The revised programming standards emphasize stronger relationships between gifted education, general education, and special education and integrate cognitive science research. 4. The revised programming standards emphasize evidence-based practices that are based on research (Matthews & Shaunessy, 2010).

In England, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in 2006, has developed a suite of National Quality Standards for Gifted and Talented Education (DCSF, 2006). The National Quality Standards is an umbrella term which embraces two sets of Quality Standards:

Institutional Quality Standards (IQS) (2006) which are originally conceived in 2003 and influenced in part by the NAGC standards. The IQS are designed to be accessible and relevant to all schools and colleges, with varying experience and expertise in gifted and talented education, and in all areas of the country. The IQS have received the support of both Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and by National College for Teaching & Leadership (NCSL), and are recognized by Ofsted as the default for Gifted and Talented (DCSF, 2006). The IQS have three levels (Entry, Developing and Exemplary) which are related to OFSTED rating. The Entry Level relates to a *satisfactory* OFSTED rating. The

Developing Level relates to a *good* OFSTED rating. The Exemplary Level relates to a *very good / excellent* OFSTED rating.

The IQS may be used as: a self-evaluation framework to raise individual pupil and whole school or college achievement • an in-depth analysis of gifted needs and provision • an audit tool to identify gaps in provision within the evaluation and planning cycle underpinning the New Relationships with Schools • As a mechanism for identifying the professional development needs of teachers and head teachers • to compare practice within a school as a way to identify the quality of learning and teaching.

The *Classroom Quality Standards* (CQS) were part of the suite of National Quality Standards for Gifted and Talented Education and were introduced in 2007 (Kerry, Richardson, & Lambert, 2010). They were specifically designed to improve classroom practice for Gifted and Talented students. They emphasized more on the teaching and learning dimensions of the IQS and applied them to classroom day-to-day practice rather than school as whole.

The CQS were conceived as support tool with three different layers. The first layer “a quick self-review” provides a starting point for all staff engaging with the CQS. It helps teachers to gain a quick overview of their current practice in providing challenge for all students. It is a tool for undertaking an initial review across seven key features of effective support and challenge in teaching and learning. The middle layer “a deeper, evidence-based evaluation” is about applying these features specifically to the need of gifted learners using a generic or subject-focused approach for English, mathematics, science and ICT. The third layer “support for next steps in improvement” contains online support materials, case studies, exemplification and guidance to help teachers to identify ways

of improving classroom provision (Kerry et al., 2010).

In 2009, the set of English quality standards was completed with the introduction of local authority quality standards (LAQS) which is similar to the US district standards. However, it is based on the assumption that the role of local authorities is to support the improvement processes initiated by schools.

In Netherlands, CPS standards were developed when the Department of Education, Culture, and Science initiated and funded a CPS project called "Schools With a Gifted Profile in Secondary Education" (De Boer, Minnaert, & Kamphof, 2013). The aim of this CPS standards were to set up a national standards for schools that tailored their education and counseling to the needs of gifted students. The standards were also used to align school curriculum and teaching with gifted student's needs.

In Wales, The Quality Standards in Education for More Able and Talented Pupils were published in 2008 by the Welsh Assembly Government in collaboration with NACE and based on NACE's Challenge Award (Blaker et al., 2010). It is a commercially available standard which emerged at about the same time as the IQS and informed by its development. The Welsh Assembly standards has ten Quality Standards which can be used by schools as a developmental tool at an early stage of planning provision for more gifted and talented pupils. Schools that have already developed policies and practices for the gifted can use the Quality Standards to audit their provision and plan for improvement. They also provide useful evidence for schools preparing for their ESTYN inspections. schools with well-established provision and action-planning systems for gifted education can use the standards to be formally assessed, by The National Association for Able Children in

Education (NACE), for 'The Challenge Award' quality mark (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008).

In New Zealand, the National Administration Guideline (NAG) published in December 2003 and required schools to implement gifted and talented provisions starting from 2005. The self-evaluation instrument was published in 2009 and has been developed to collect data for the evaluation report Schools' Provision for Gifted and Talented Students. It is used since then as a framework to evaluate whether schools are meeting the gifted provision requirements (Education Review Office, 2008).

In the next year, the assessment instrument developed *in Saudi Arabia* for the Mawhiba Schools Partnership. The Standard is based on the most up to date research and thinking (king abdulaziz and his companions foundation for giftedness and creativity, 2010). According to Mawhiba, it has been informed by the work of Pam Sammons et al who devised a model of school effectiveness (Sammons, Hillman, & Mortimore, 1995). They were also commissioned by the UK Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) to review the literature of international school effectiveness. Accredited partner schools should include provision for all learners up to Grade 3 and, in Grades 4-12. They should also have separate classes for gifted students as well as mixed ability classes for all students (king abdulaziz and his companions foundation for giftedness and creativity, 2010).

Research Method

A total of 10 standards in six countries are studied. Two countries (the US and England) have updated and published revised standards. The other four were: Saudi Arabia, Netherlands, Wales, and New Zealand. They each have produced a single edition. These 10 standards will be

investigated to answer the following research questions:

- What are the similarities and differences between gifted quality standards across the six countries according to the core purpose(s) of their standards?
- What are the similarities and differences between gifted quality standards across the six countries according to structures of the standards?
- What are the similarities and differences between gifted quality standards across six countries according to the contents of the standards?

Rationales for Cross-country Comparisons

Comparative studies are widely used throughout the social sciences. According to Azarian (2011), the main goal of comparative studies is to arrive at a typology based on the observed differences and similarities among cases. Marmor et al (2005) had stated three objectives for undertaking Cross-country comparative studies “learning about, learning why, and learning from”. Learning about helps to make sense of the observed variations and capture the principles of both similarities and differences across various settings. They frequently form the basis for more analytical analyses and it is descriptive in its nature. The second purpose of Cross-country comparative studies is learning why something has developed in a certain way. This type of comparative analysis is called by Tilly (1984) as the universalizing comparison. Most of studies adopted this approach are reflective and aims at either; testing a theory or develop causal theories with considerable generality and wide range of applicability. It may also aim at developing a classification or typology; tracing processes (e.g. of policy implementation) over time; explaining past

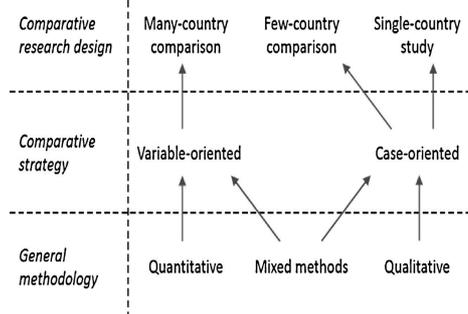
developments; or predicting future trends (Tilly, 1984).

The third category of comparative studies as stated by Marmor et al (2005) is “learning from” which aims at identifying ‘best practice’ to be transferred from one setting or country to another.

This study is descriptive in its nature and aims to learn about variations and capture the principles of both similarities and differences across various gifted quality standards. It may form the basis for more analytical analyses in future and establishing international co-operations concerned with the development of further education modules and programs in giftedness and gifted education.

Furthermore, the purpose of a study determines the level of analysis and the research design. According to Ragin (2014) Comparative Research Designs are depends on whether a study compares a larger or smaller number of cases. Yet, Depends on the number of cases are compared, comparative strategy can be either variable-oriented or case-oriented. The current study is a case-oriented study, where a small number of countries are studied. The current study used qualitative method which is associated with case-oriented studies.

The following figure 1 shows the relationship of comparative research design to methods.



Source: Lor PJ. (2010)

Results

Across six different countries, 10 gifted quality standards were examined. They were the updated and published revised standards in England and the US. The other four were a single edition in each of the following countries; Saudi Arabia, New Zealand, Netherlands, and Wales.

To answer this study research questions, they were examined in terms of their purposes and structures. An in-depth review

of the contents of eight of them were also conducted.

Comparative Analysis: Purposes

Aims and purposes for the examined standards varies. The most common purposes used for the standards by far was “Self-evaluation” and “Improvement planning”. The following Table 1 shows the purposes of these standards.

Table

Purpose	IQS1	IQS2	CQS	LAQS	NAGC1	NAGC2	CPSTKI	MSP	Welsh Assembly
Define the shape and constituent elements of gifted education									
Establish generic understanding across subjects and phases									
Common language for discussion									
Reflection by teachers on their own practice									
Improve pupil and school level achievement									
Improve gifted education locally, regionally and nationally									
Set minimum expectations for schools									
Self-evaluation									
External assessment									
Improvement planning									
Peer review									
Curriculum planning									
Professional development									
Innovation									
Advocacy									
Cross-school collaboration									
Select schools into a partnership									
Accreditation of schools									
Structure guidance									
Catalogue resources									

Comparative Analysis: Structure

To answer the second research question; an examination of the shape and structure of the 10 standards were conducted. The following Table 2 shows the standards in the order of their development.

Table 2

Standard	Country	Date	No. of elements	No. of levels
NAGC v1	USA	1998	7	2 (Minimum, Exemplary)
IQS v1	England	2005	14	3 (Entry, Developing, Exemplary)
CPS	Netherlands	2005	6	1
CQS	England	2007	7	3 (Entry, Developing, Exemplary)
Welsh Assembly	Wales	2008	10*	1
LAQS	England	2009	13	3 (Entry, Developing, Exemplary)
TKI	New Zealand	2009	9	3 (Entry, Developing, Exemplary)
MSP	Saudi Arabia	2010	9	4 (Limited, Developing, Good, Excellent)
NAGC v2	USA	2010	6	1
IQS v2	England	2010	14	3 (Entry, Developing, Exemplary)

As is shown from the table above, the number of levels typically is one or three, with some exceptions. In the Saudi example, the four grading are not actually built into the standard, but a 1-4 scale against each statement. Something similar is to be found in Netherlands, which schools score themselves on a 1-5 scale against each statement.

The New Zealand standards are unique in including a column about 'not meeting the standards' which worth to be considered

broadly as it gives additional context for judgment. Moreover, standards elements were ranged from 6 to 14, with the UK Standards at the upper end of the range and the US and Dutch examples at the lower end.

Little common practices are relatively shown in these standards as presented in in Table 3, below. The division into elements as well as the order in which they appear are also different.

Table 3

Wellsh Ass embly	Who sch ool strat	Identificatio n	Target for imp rove	Learnin g styl eac	Review iden tify und	Improve skill s of all	Support for exe cuti onal	Resourc e incl uding	Takeing acc ount of pupi l plan	Monitorin g acti on								
MS P	Students achiv e	Leadership and	School etho s	Teaching and	Classroom man agement	Student pers onal	Parental invo lvement	Communication	Advanc ed Part									
TKI	Professional learning	Definition and	Policies/pro cedure	Research	Identificatio n	Major or dinary on	Cultural dive rsity	Effective Tea ching	Beyond the regu lar									
CPS	Organization	Education and	Support and cou nsel	Communication	Quality imp rove	Benefit to othe r												
NA GC 2	Learning and	Assessment and	Curriculum plan	Learning expe rience	Programmi ng	Professional essia n	Curriculum and											
NA GC 1	Student ident ification	Professional essia n development	Socio-emo tion	Program Eva	Program desi gn	Program adm in	Curriculum and											
LA OS	Leadership	Policy	Ethics and	Research	Engaging with	Identificatio n	Effective civi c pro	Learning bey ond										
CQ SI	Connections for	Development of	Knowledge and	Understanding	Planning	Engagemen t	Linkages											
IQS 2	Standards and	Effective practice	Identificatio n	Assessment	Transfer and	Engagemen t	Leadership	Monitoring and										
IQS 1	Identificatio n	Effective practice	Standards	Essential	Transfer and	Transfer and	Leadership	Monitoring and										

As was shown from Table 3 above, little evidence to suggest a tendency towards consensus about gifted education practices across these countries. Contents of these standards are examined in details in answering research question 3 below.

Comparative Analysis: Content

To address the third research question, the study adopted the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC v2) gifted programming standards as a framework for content comparisons. It's been chosen as a framework because they include only evidence-based practices that support the

corresponding student outcomes. This support falls into three categories: (a) research based, (b) practice-based, and (c) literature-based (CEC, 2010). Unlike other standards including NAGC v1, NAGC v2 standards are grounded in theory, research, and practice paradigms. They were developed with input from a variety of stakeholders. The standards increase the focus on diversity and collaboration. These two principals were linked with high quality programs and services. The standards were in line with the thinking in education standards generally by using

student outcomes for goals, rather than teacher practices. Finally, they provide an important direction for gifted provisions (CEC, 2010). NAGC v2 includes six standards: Learning and Development, Assessment, Curriculum & Instruction, Learning Environments, Programming, Professional Development. NAGC v2 standards are used as a framework for content comparisons which are presented below.

Standard1: Learning and Development

Before planning and implementing the other standards, this standard focus on

Table 4

NAGC2	IQS2	CQS1	LAQS	CPS	TKI	MSP	Welsh Assembly
Standard 1: Learning and development	-	Standard 2: Development of Learning Standard 4: Understanding learners' needs	-	Standard 3: support and counseling	-	Standard 6: Student personal development	Standard 9a: listening to and taking account of the views of more able and talented young people and encouraging them to take responsibility for their own learning.

It appears that only five standards namely (NAGC2 , CQS1,CPS, MSP and Welsh Assembly) have standards that recognize differences among gifted students in terms of their learning styles and development as well as understanding of their own cognitive and affective growth in the school, home, and community.

It seems that CQS1 has emphasized more on students development with more than one standard related to this aspect. This is addressed somewhat in the 2010 standards where emphasis is placed on developing all students' personal, social, cultural and communications competence, as well as their leadership skills.

However, soft skills are almost entirely lacking from either version of the IQS, which merely contain brief references to

understanding students' needs and characteristics as an important phase. This standard recognize the differences among gifted students in term of their development and learning styles. It also encourages their awareness of their needs. It emphasizes the importance of the cognitive and affective growth of the gifted and impact of environment (Johnsen, 2014). The following table 4 shows whether this standard is existed across the comparison standards:

support for learners' social and emotional needs and action to combat bullying and stress. The Welsh also tend to concentrate on the more tangible issues within this spectrum, such as careers education and guidance and pupils' attitudes towards learning. Similarly, in Saudi standard (Standard L10), it emphasizes students access to high quality information and guidance on future pathways and lifelong learning.

The pastoral support dimension is slightly better developed in the Dutch CPS standards. However, only the Saudi standard seems to be aligned with NAGC2 standards, covering students' resilience, perseverance and self-esteem, as well as their tolerance and respect for each other. In addition, All schools in TKI standards are

expected to demonstrate an understanding of the Maori world view and consultation with Maori staff. TKI devotes an entire element to the Maori Dimension and another to Cultural Differences. At exemplary level, schools should reflect Maori beliefs throughout their provision while Maori conceptions of giftedness should be acknowledged and respected at the middle level. This separate standards about Maori was itself a ‘non-negotiable’. In this regard, the Kiwi approach matches the NAGC2 approach where it focuses on diversity.

In addition, parental engagement was strongly emphasized in all standards. The Saudi and the Welsh standards seem to be well matched in this regard.

Moreover, Welsh standard has emphasized that schools must listen regularly to

students’ views, feedback and aspirations, in order to understand barriers that exist to their achievement. Actions and planning taken by schools then need to be based on such views. Similarly, Saudi standard (T1) emphasizes seeking out students’ views and acting on good suggestions. In addition, it includes that the individual needs of students must be recognized and fulfilled.

Standards 2 : Assessment

This standard includes information of all forms of assessments which are inextricably related to each other; identification, the assessment of learning progress and outcomes, and evaluation of programming. However, it seems that the other standards may have more than one standard to address each form of assessment (Johnsen, 2014). This is illustrated in the following Table 5.

Table 5

NAGC2	IQS2	CQS1	LAQS	CPS	TKI	MSP	Welsh Assembly
Standard 2: Assessment	Standard 3: Identification Standard 4: Assessment Standard 8: Monitoring and evaluation	Standard 4: Understanding learners’ needs	Standard 6: Identification Standards 12: Monitoring + evaluation	Standard 3: support and counseling	Standard 5: Identification	Standard 1: Student achievement	Standard 2: Identification strategies and criteria Standard 5: regular reviews to identify underachievement and support individual

The table above shows that all standards incorporates knowledge of different forms of assessments including identification, the assessment of learning progress and outcomes, and evaluation of programming. While the NAGC2 and TKI standards sensibly take the view that identification is integral to assessment, the other standards

retain a separation between identification and the assessment of gifted students.

NAGC2 highlighted that identification should draw on multiple assessments including ‘off-level testing’ and ‘culturally sensitive checklists’. On the other hand, in Dutch standard, Identification including self-assessment are incorporated within the standard ‘support and counseling’. In MSP

standard, it is almost absent likely because identification is undertaken by external body.

In New Zealand standard (TKI), entry level involves developing an appropriate definition of the gifted which recognizes different traits of giftedness. In addition, the TKI standards include more details about identification: “entry level identification must involve more than two sources of information (eg parents, teachers, peers), and more than two types of information (eg tests, observations, interviews)”. At ‘Improving level’ a register and individual profiles are required. Welsh standards emphasized that schools should have a clear rationale for identification that is inclusive of all students who have above normal abilities.

Academic performance was included in the English standards with reference to the gifted as high attainers, who are of only a subcategory of the gifted population. However, the earlier edition focuses on

performance within schools; the later switches to national averages and also introduces expectations for students’ progress.

On other hand, even though NAGC2 standards were built around students’ outcomes, they seem to not address clearly academic achievement dimension in its assessment standard.

The MSP standards and The Welsh Assembly Standards do refer to high student achievement , but in general term and without any sort of expectation relating to their academic achievement. It may be because it was difficult to find a formulation that would apply equally to all gifted students.

Standard 3: Curriculum & Instruction

The third NAGC2 standard not only addresses curricular planning but also talent development, instructional strategies, culturally relevant curriculum, and accessing appropriate resources to engage a variety of learners (Johnsen, 2014).

NAGC2	IQS2	CQS1	LAQS	CPS	TKI	MSP	Welsh Assembly
Standard 3: Curriculum planning and instruction	Standard 2: Effective provision in the classroom Standard 6: Enabling curriculum entitlement + choice Standard 12: Resources	Standard 3: Knowledge of subjects + themes Standard 5: planning Standard 6: Engagement with learners and learning	Standard 4: Resources Standard 7 Effective provision in the classroom Standard 9: Enabling curriculum entitlement + choice	Standard 2: Education and learning	Standard 4: Resources Standard 8: Effective Teaching and Learning	Standard 4: Teaching and learning	Standard 4a: Learning styles, teaching approaches, Standard 4b: Curriculum offers breadth, depth and flexibility Standard 4c: Provision addresses pastoral care and learning needs Standard 8: Resources including ICT

In terms of funding, both the English standards and the Welsh were typically coy

about funding, where the English referring only to ‘appropriate budgets’, where the

Walsh reference was to the school governors 'allocating appropriate resources'. The NAGC2 standards are slightly better, calling at exemplary level for equitable distribution of funds for gifted education compared with other programmes and services, and for funding to be tied to programme goals. While it is crucial, funding was almost absent in the other standards.

Teaching and learning was covered similarly in both; the MSP standards and England's separate CQS. It might be because both were concerning at school level. They advocate a wide range of teaching strategies and methods, the subject knowledge development, student

involvement and feedback, collaborative learning, problem-solving, higher order questioning, independent research and independent risk-taking. This was even extends more in Welsh standards, to a requirement that learners can access school library and IT facilities out of school hours.

Standard 4: Learning Environments

The fourth NAGC2 standard focuses on the creation of safe learning environments where students are able to develop personal, social, cultural, communication, and leadership competencies. The following table compare standards on this element (Johnsen, 2014).

NAGC2	IQS2	CQS1	LAQS	CPS	TKI	MSP	Welsh Assembly
Standard 4: Learning environments	School ethos and pastoral care	Conditions for learning	-	Communication with parents pupil and environment	-	School ethos	-

Johnsen (2014) stated that, "to achieve outcomes of these standards, educators create environments that (a) not only have high expectations, but also honor effort (Cross, Stewart, & Coleman, 2003; Dweck & Kamins, 1999; McKown & Weinstein, 2008); (b) are safe and welcoming for exploring issues and for risk taking (Brody, 1999; Neihart, 2002); (c) provide opportunities for self-exploration and leadership (Frey, 1998; Hensel, 1991; Ross & Smyth, 1995); (d) promote positive interactions with artistic/creative and chronological-age peers (Enersen, 1993; Olszewski-Kubilius, Grant, & Seibert, 1994); (e) support diverse learners (Cline & Schwartz, 2000; den Brok, Levy, Rodriguez, & Wubbels, 2002); and (f) teach positive coping, social, and communication skills (Berger, 2003; Kitano

& Lewis, 2005; Kolesinski & Leroux, 1992)" (Johnsen, 2014, p. 15).

In MSP standard, school environment has given a special attention where it defines successful school as to demonstrate a positive ethos through its values and principles. Similarly, IQS in its exemplary level highlights three aspects of environment; an ethos of ambition and achievement which is to be agreed and shared by the whole school community, the school consistently places equal emphasis on high achievement and emotional well-being, and pupils use their gifts to benefit other pupils and the wider community.

In the same way, learning conditions was stressed in the CQS that "learners are healthy and safe and enjoy their learning".

In Dutch standards (CPS), the emphasis was on the role of parents involvement and engagement with schools in providing the

best possible environment for the gifted. Similarity, in CQS, parents and carers should be included in supporting and developing their children's learning.

Standard 5: Programming

The fifth NAGC2 standard includes a variety of programming options that are

coordinated and implemented by teams of educators who have adequate resources and policies and procedures to implement comprehensive services, which include talent development and career planning (Johnsen, 2014).

NAGC2	IQS2	CQS1	LAQS	CPS	TKI	MSP	Welsh Assembly
Standard 5: Programming	Effective provision in the classroom	Standard 5: Planning	Effective provision in the classroom	-	-	-	Learning styles, teaching approaches, organizational strategies Curriculum offers breadth, depth and flexibility Provision addresses pastoral care

Whereas the Welsh standards does not include acceleration or a faster pace of learning, even in the section about supporting the gifted, the NAGC2 standards are very much the opposite. NAGC2 stressed that educators are encouraged to regularly use multiple alternative approaches to accelerate learning.

The Relations of gifted provision with local and national providers (e.g., universities and organizations) was stressed in IQS earlier edition but was replaced in the later edition by a reference to collaboration with other schools. It may be because the policy change around this time in UK and Europe that moved towards more school-based (Brown, Rowley, & Smith, 2015).

In CQS standards, schools are assessed on how well is a range of different teaching

and learning styles and strategies used in planning activities to ensure extension, enrichment and progression. Similarly, CPS assessed schools based on how well schools have a variation in instruction, grouping forms (according to level, interest, learning objectives), and enrichment activities taking into account the different learning styles by the gifted.

Standard 6: Professional Development

This standard examines the preparation of educators and the knowledge and skills needed to develop their students' talent and socio-emotional development. It also emphasizes high-quality educator development that creates lifelong learners who are ethical in their practices (Johnsen, 2014).

NAGC2	IQS2	CQS1	LAQS	CPS	TKI	MSP	Welsh Assembly
Standard 6: Professional Development	Staff development	-	Staff development	-	Professional learning	Leadership and management	Improve the skills of all staff

Except CQS1 and CPS, all standards across the examined countries have a standard related to professional development for teachers. While it is clearly not an outcomes, which is the focus of NAGC2, the NAGC2 standards highly stress the importance of professional development to support students individual needs. In the same way, the TKI standards require, at exemplary level, that all teachers in the school have undertaken relevant professional learning, that gifted education specialists have professional qualifications and in-services training is available for gifted teachers. Saudi standards require schools with gifted programs to ensure that a professional development programme (based on the theory and practice) is available for all teachers. The Saudi standard has also a reference to a school coordinator, who is supported with the time and resources to model best practice, be the resident expert in teaching and learning and act as a key driver in bringing about ‘deep’ change.

In Wales standards, schools are required to provide professional development for teachers as well as support staff that cover a range of gifted aspects (e.g., identification, needs and provisions).

Similarly, the IQS2 contains an explicit requirement for a coordinator or lead teacher in each school with overall responsibility for gifted education. In fact this requirement is common to most standards except the NAGC2, which may be explained by their status as district standards.

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to study similarities and differences of gifted quality standards across different countries in terms of their purposes, structure and contents. All the examined standards have outstanding features as well as shortcomings. This reinforces the importance of taking a global perspective and reviewing existing standards. NCGA2 standards was used as a framework for content comparisons. It’s been chosen as a framework because they include only evidence-based practices that support the corresponding student outcomes.

As was shown by the result of this study, there are similarities and difference across countries in terms of gifted quality standards’ purposes, structures, and what dimensions are incorporated into standards. Although different aspects of gifted education has not agreed upon universally, this study shed light on how similarities of some aspects of gifted standards across different countries can be a promise into having universal gifted quality standards that is flexible enough to be applied universally, to every setting, regardless of countries, phase, sector, status, funding or any other variable. For this optimal approach to be succeed, they must allow sufficient scope to meet varying perspectives of experts (practitioners and academics) and circumstances, support divergent interpretation, promote innovation and allow for changes to the paradigm and the wider policy context and priorities.

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