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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-56529

Title: Educator's Attitudes Regarding Their Competencies for Working with Gifted Children

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		√		
Techn. Quality			√	
Clarity		√		
Significance		√		

Reviewer's ID: JPR- 212

Detailed Reviewer's Report

This manuscript presents a timely and contextually valuable investigation into preschool educators' self-perceived competencies for working with gifted children in the Republic of North Macedonia. The study addresses an important gap in the literature by examining a population that has been insufficiently studied in this region. The mixed-methods approach (surveys with 132 educators plus qualitative interviews) provides a robust foundation for understanding both broad trends and individual experiences.

The paper makes a meaningful contribution by documenting the gap between educators' awareness of gifted children's needs and their confidence in meeting those needs, while also connecting these findings to international literature and theoretical frameworks (Gagné, Renzulli, Vygotsky, Tomlinson). The practical implications for teacher education programs and professional development policy are clearly articulated.

However, several areas require attention to strengthen the manuscript's scholarly rigor and presentation quality before publication.

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Major Revisions Required

1. Missing Figures and Graphical Content

Critical Issue: The manuscript references multiple graphs that are not visible in the provided PDF:

- Graph 1 (page 3): "Location of the preschool institution" – only an image placeholder appears
- Graph 2 (page 4): "Recognition of characteristics" – only an image placeholder appears
- Graph 3 (page 5): Referenced but not clearly visible/identified
- Graph 4 (page 5-6): Text describes the graph but the visual is missing
- Graphs 5-8: All referenced but not visible

Action Required: All graphical data must be properly embedded and visible. For each graph, ensure:

- Clear labeling (titles, axes, legends)
- Numerical values or percentages visible
- High-resolution, readable format
- Alternative text descriptions for accessibility

2. Incomplete Interview Data Integration

The abstract and methodology (lines 63-69) mention semi-structured interviews as part of the mixed-methods approach, but the Results and Discussion section presents only quantitative survey data.

Action Required:

- Include representative quotes or thematic findings from the qualitative interviews
- Use interview data to illustrate or contextualize the survey findings
- Explain how many interviews were conducted and how they were analyzed

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- If interviews were conducted but not analyzed in time for this manuscript, either remove mention of them or present preliminary findings

3. Theoretical Framework Integration

While key theorists are cited in the introduction (Gagné, Renzulli, Vygotsky, Tomlinson), the discussion section does not consistently return to these frameworks to interpret findings.

Action Required: Strengthen the Discussion by explicitly connecting findings to theoretical concepts:

- How do the 58.3% "partially confident" educators reflect Vygotsky's zone of proximal development at the professional level?
- Does the 7.6% "fully prepared" finding support Tomlinson's argument that differentiation requires extensive training?
- How might Renzulli's three-ring conception of giftedness influence identification practices?

Minor Revisions Required

4. Formatting and Typographical Errors

The manuscript requires thorough proofreading. Examples include:

Line 1: "EDUCATOR'S ATTITUDES" – should be "EDUCATORS' ATTITUDES" (plural possessive)

Line 19: Missing line break before "INTRODUCTION"

Line 65: "data show that 66%66%" – unnecessary backslashes before percentages throughout

Line 90: "image[[287, 400, 674, 599]]" – formatting artifact should be removed

Multiple instances: Inconsistent spacing around headings and between sections

References section: "REFERENCESC Callahan, C. M." – missing space after "REFERENCES"

5. Percentage Reporting Consistency

Several inconsistencies in percentage reporting:

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Page 4, lines 81-83: "25.8% fully confident, 58.3% partially confident, 15.2% unsure, 0.8% unable" – total = 100.1% (rounding issue)

Page 6, lines 133-138: "42.4% moderate, 38.6% good, 11.4% insufficient, 7.6% fully prepared" – total = 100% exactly (good)

Page 7, lines 159-162: "10% fully agree, 60% agree, 28% neutral, 3% disagree" – total = 101% (rounding issue)

Action Required: Standardize to one decimal place and ensure totals sum to 100% or note rounding.

6. Graph 3 Description Issue

On page 5, the text states: "The data were obtained through a self-assessment scale on which educators evaluated their level of theoretical knowledge of different models and theories of giftedness." However, Graph 3 is not clearly identified, and the preceding graph appears to show differentiation data. This creates confusion about which data correspond to which research question.

Action Required: Renumber graphs sequentially and ensure each is clearly titled and referenced in the text.

7. Research Questions Alignment

The three research questions (lines 54-58) are:

1. How do educators assess their own competence?
2. What are their perceptions of professional support?
3. Which aspects of professional development are priority?

The results address question 1 thoroughly but provide limited direct data on questions 2 and 3 (perceptions of support and priorities). Graph 7 addresses training needs generally, but specific priorities are not detailed.

Action Required: Add explicit findings related to:

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- What specific types of support educators perceive as available/missing
- Ranked priorities for professional development content
- Barriers to accessing existing support

Specific Technical Comments

Page 1, Abstract

- Well-written and accurately represents the study
- Consider specifying the sample size (132) in the abstract

Page 2, Lines 33-40

- Strong literature integration; consider adding a brief transition sentence before research questions

Page 3, Methodology

- Good description of mixed-methods approach
- **Missing:** Response rate, sampling method (convenience/purposive/random), dates of data collection, interview protocol details
- Ethical considerations mentioned but could be expanded (informed consent, data storage, etc.)

Page 4, Graph 2 Discussion

- Strong interpretation linking findings to Pfeiffer & Shaughnessy (2024) and Callahan & Müller (2023)
- The discussion of "intuition vs. scientifically grounded criteria" is particularly insightful

Page 5, Graph 3 Discussion

- Important finding that only 6.8% are fully confident in theoretical knowledge

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- The 27% neutral + 6% insufficient = 33% with significant theoretical gaps – this deserves emphasis

Page 6, Graph 4 Discussion

- Excellent integration of Sanchez-Escobedo & Hollingworth (2025) regarding mandatory coursework
- The finding that 0% rated preparation as "very insufficient" is interesting – discuss why educators might avoid the extreme negative anchor

Page 7-8, Graphs 5-6 Discussion

- The identified discrepancy between moderate preparation (Graph 4) and high practical confidence (Graphs 5-6) is a key finding
- The "gray zone" of 28-39% neutral responses is well-analyzed
- Excellent connection to Kwan & Lau's (2025) concept of "inclusive excellence"

Page 8, Graph 7

- 91% expressing need for additional training is a powerful finding for policymakers
- Consider discussing what types of training are most needed

Page 9, Graph 8

- 90% agreement on importance of special support – strong foundation for advocacy
- The 10% neutral (no disagreement) suggests near-universal recognition of importance

Page 10, Conclusion

- Well-summarized; consider adding specific recommendations for:
 - Pre-service teacher education curriculum changes
 - In-service professional development structure
 - Mentoring program design

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- o Policy advocacy targets

Reference

The reference list is current and includes appropriate foundational and recent sources (2023-2025). However:

1. **Formatting:** "REFERENCESC Callahan" – insert space
2. **DOI consistency:** Most include DOIs (good); ensure all have complete DOIs where available
3. **Alphabetical order:** Verify order (appears correct but check after formatting fixes)
4. **Journal abbreviations:** Not used – full journal titles are appropriate

Strengths of the Paper

1. **Contextual relevance:** Addresses an understudied population with implications for regional educational policy
2. **Methodological appropriateness:** Mixed-methods provide both breadth and depth
3. **Theoretical grounding:** Well-connected to established gifted education frameworks
4. **Practical significance:** Clear implications for teacher training and professional development
5. **International relevance:** Findings connect to global conversations about early childhood gifted education
6. **Honest reporting:** The "partial confidence" and "neutral" responses are interpreted candidly rather than minimized