

WORKING WITH INTENSITY

The relationship between giftedness and sensitivity
in working adults in Flanders and the Netherlands

Thesis by Rianne van de Ven for
ECHA Specialist in Gifted Education
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Abstract

The last decades, psychologists and educationalists have investigated the concept of giftedness extensively, resulting in different models and definitions of giftedness. In a clinical environment mental health professionals see a strong relation between giftedness and sensitivity. Academics researching excellent performing children however do not report any relation to sensitivity. The Highly Sensitive Person (HSP) and Overexcitabilities (OE's) are two models in the domain of sensitivity. In this study the relationship between giftedness, HSP and OE's was investigated in adults active on the labour market in the Netherlands and Flanders, Belgium.

The results show a relation between giftedness and HSP. Gifted Adults (GA) outscore non-Gifted Adults (nGA) significantly on three of the five OE's: the sensual, the imaginal and the intellectual OE. HSP's show significant differences compared to non-HSP on all five OE's, on four OE's significantly higher, on one OE – the psychomotorical OE - significantly lower. GA's that are also HSP outscore non-HSP GA's on four of the OE's: all but the psychomotorical OE.

Developing positive coping mechanisms for dealing with giftedness and sensitivity may be an important catalyst for developing gifts into talents.

Key words: gifted, gifted adults, highly sensitive person, overexcitabilities.

Samenvatting

De afgelopen decennia is het onderwerp hoogbegaafdheid door psychologen en onderwijskundigen uitgebreid onderzocht. Dit leidde tot meerdere modellen en definities van hoogbegaafdheid. In de klinische wereld zien geestelijke gezondheidsprofessionals een sterke relatie tussen hoogbegaafdheid en (hoog-)sensitiviteit. Academics die excellent presterende kinderen onderzoeken, rapporteren echter geen relatie met (hoog-)sensitiviteit.

De 'Highly Sensitive Person' (HSP) en de zogenaamde 'Overexcitabilities' zijn twee modellen in het domein van sensitiviteit. In dit onderzoek werd de relatie tussen hoogbegaafdheid, HSP en overexcitabilities onderzocht bij werkende volwassenen in Nederland en Vlaanderen.

De resultaten laten een relatie zien tussen hoogbegaafdheid en HSP. De hoogbegaafde volwassenen scoren significant hoger dan niet-hoogbegaafde volwassenen op drie van de vijf overexcitabilities, te weten de zintuiglijke, de verbeeldende en de intellectuele overexcitability. HSP's scoren op alle vijf overexcitabilities significant anders dan niet-HSP. Vier maal hoger, eenmaal significant lager – op de psychomotorische. De hoogbegaafde volwassenen die ook HSP zijn scoren op vier van de vijf overexcitabilities hoger dan hoogbegaafde volwassenen die niet-HSP zijn, namelijk op alle behalve de psychomotorische overexcitability.

Het ontwikkelen van positieve coping mechanismes in het omgaan met hoogbegaafdheid en hoogsensitiviteit is een belangrijke katalysator in het ontwikkelen van gaven en aanleg tot competenties en talenten.

The last decades psychologists and educationalists have investigated the concept of giftedness extensively resulting in different models and definitions of giftedness. Most of these define giftedness as more than just a high IQ. But which aspects are included differs per definition (Sternberg & Davidson, 2005). The three-ring-model (Renzulli, 1986) mentions task commitment and creativity as two aspects besides above average ability. Recent models are developmental models and focus on the educational needs for talent development (Heller, Perleth & Lim, 2005; Gagné, 2002). An exception to that trend is the model Kieboom (2007) presented. She makes a distinction between the cognitive part, the ‘thinking view’ and the existential part, the ‘feeling view’. In this model sensitivity is stated as a part of being gifted. Kieboom’s work derives from twenty five years of working with gifted children in a clinical environment.

Most definitions of giftedness are the result of research with children. However when you look at giftedness as something a person is and not as something a person can become, then giftedness is a trait that does not go away when turning 18. Then, gifted children become gifted adults (Fiedler, 2015; Schoon, 2000). Some definitions of giftedness are specifically describing giftedness in adults. Jacobsen (1999) defines gifted traits in adults as intensity, complexity and drive. A Delphi-study in the Netherlands lead to the description: “a gifted person is a quick and clever thinker, who is able to deal with complex matters. Autonomous, curious and passionate. A sensitive and emotionally rich individual, living intensely. He or she enjoys being creative.” (Kooijman-Van Thiel, 2008, p.69). Gifted adults have stated they can really identify themselves in this Delphi-description. (Kooijman-Van Thiel, 2008). Like Kieboom’s definition, these models are created by professionals with years of experience in working with gifted adults in a mental health environment.

Sensitivity and intensity are mentioned to be a part of the concept of giftedness by professionals working with the gifted - both adults and children - in a clinical environment. The studies into excellent performing children like the longitudinal Terman studies (Terman, 1925-1967) and the studies into the Mathematically Precocious Youth (Stanley, 1972-1997) do not mention any relation between giftedness and sensitivity and/or intensity.

The Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (Gagné, 2012) is a developmental model (Figure 1) in which giftedness is seen in the context of natural abilities - and not in performance or results - and therefore it is also a model gifted adults can relate to.

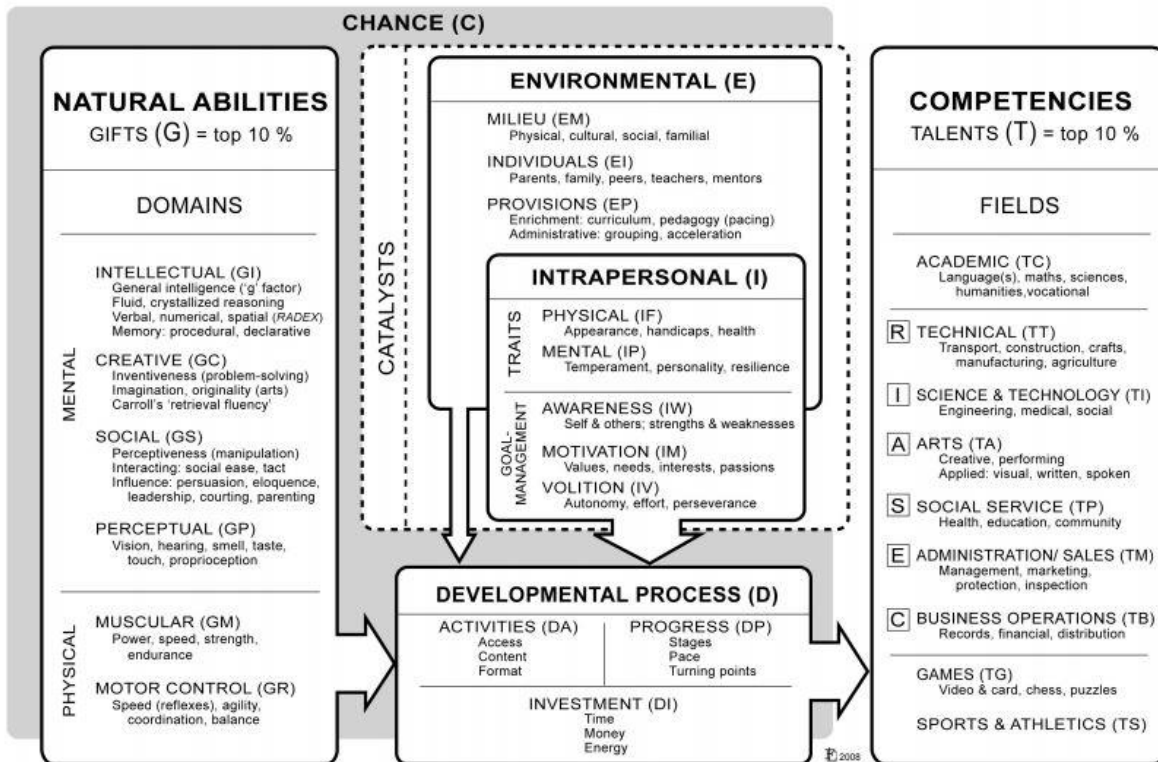


Figure 1 The updated version of the DMGT (2.0) by François Gagné

Gagné makes a distinction between gifts and talents. Giftedness designates the possession of outstanding natural abilities, called aptitudes, in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of age peers.

In his model, talent designates the outstanding mastery of systematically developed abilities, called competencies (knowledge and skills), in at least one field of human activity to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of age peers who are or have been active in that field (Gagné, 2012).

The DMGT 2.0 describes the influences on the developmental process of the gifts into talents. Besides chance being of great influence, intrapersonal and environmental catalysts are described. Like the meaning in the field of chemistry, catalysts facilitate and accelerate a process (Gagné, 2012).

People differ in the ability to register, process, and respond to external factors. This is defined as sensitivity (Pluess, 2015). In the model of Gagné (2012) this ability to register and process can be placed under the perceptual natural ability. The way people respond to internal and external factors is part of what Gagné calls the intrapersonal mental traits. So sensitivity can be viewed as one of the catalysts influencing the development process of gifts into talents.

A concept in the area of sensitivity that explains the difference between people is the concept of HSP, short for Highly Sensitive Person. This term is introduced as sensory processing sensitivity in popular psychology by Aron and Aron (1997). Sensory processing sensitivity according to Aron and Aron is an innate personality trait that occurs in 15 to 20 percent of the population and consists of the elements: depth of processing, overstimulation because of the depth of processing, emotional reactivity and empathy, and sensitivity to stimuli. Elain Aron (1996) wrote a book in which she gives a more accessible insight into their substantial research and she uses the term Highly Sensitive Person (HSP) for someone that has this trait. The abbreviation is also often used for the trait itself.

A second model that can be used to describe differences in people in intensity and sensitivity is related to 'overexcitabilities'. Overexcitability (OE) is a higher than average responsiveness to stimuli due to heightened sensitivity of nervous system receptors (Dabrowski, 1972). OE's are an element in the Theory of Positive Disintegration (Dabrowski, 1964). He described five OE's: sensual, psychomotor, emotional, imaginal and intellectual. Mendaglio (2008, p. 24-25) explains them as follows:

“Psychomotorically overexcitable individuals tend to be high-energy, curious, have difficulty sitting still, need constant change of scenery, and are generally restless.

Sensually overexcitable individuals are generally highly sensitive to sensory perceptions such as sights, smells, tastes, and tactile stimulation.

Imaginational overexcitable individuals are inclined to be daydreamers, have a rich fantasy life and are often creative.

Intellectually overexcitable individuals manifest abilities of analysis and synthesis, ask probing questions, and love learning for its own sake.

Emotionally overexcitable individuals are sensitive individuals who experience emotions intensely, tending to take things to heart. They are empathic towards others and feel a strong need for exclusive relationships.”

Piechowski, Silverman and Falk (1985) studied the relationship between giftedness and these overexcitabilities and developed a questionnaire, called the OEQ. Since then several other studies to this relation were held. In analyzing the results, Falk and Miller (2009) found that the studies repeatedly showed that the gifted were significantly overexcitable, especially in emotional OE, intellectual OE, and imaginal OE. These studies mostly included gifted children, but some also gifted adults.

Winkler (2014) also investigated the evidence of the relation between giftedness and Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities in his dissertation with a meta-analysis over 17 different studies. The reason for his study was that he found both proponents and skeptics towards the relationship between giftedness and overexcitabilities. He concludes that there is little to no evidence that gifted individuals have significantly higher P(sychomotorical)OE or S(ensual)OE than non-gifted individuals. There is some evidence to believe that gifted individuals have significantly higher E(motional)OE and (i)M(aginational)OE than non-gifted individuals. But gifted individuals consistently and significantly outscore non-gifted individuals on (in)T(ellectual)OE.

This theoretical introduction shows that there are different views on giftedness, sensitivity or intensity and the existence of any relationship between them. A lot of the mentioned research is done in relation to gifted children. These findings lead to the present study.

The Present Study

In the present study the relationship between giftedness, HSP and overexcitabilities was investigated in adults active on the labour market in the Netherlands and Flanders, Belgium.

This study was part of the program ‘Veerkrachtig op het werk’ (translation: Resilience at Work) from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, lead by Prof. Dr. Elke Van Hoof. This research program contains multiple projects investigating stress determinations and resilience at work: what factors make people sensitive to experiencing stress? Sensitivity and giftedness are included in the framework of the program.

In the context of the theoretical introduction, the following research questions were posed:

1. Is there a relationship between giftedness and HSP? How many working gifted adults gifted are HSP?
2. The relationship between giftedness and overexcitabilities: Which of Dabrowksi’s OE’s do working gifted adults show in comparison to non-gifted adults?
3. The relationship between HSP and overexcitabilities: Do HSP adults (independent of their possible giftedness) score different on Dabrowski’s overexcitabilities than non-HSP adults ?
4. The relationship between giftedness, HSP and overexcitabilities: Do working gifted adults who are also HSP score differently on the overexcitabilities than gifted adults that are non-HSP?

Method

Participants

The participants were recruited by an online website (www.veerkrachtigophetwerk.be), which was distributed via the network of the researchers. The site was open for all adults between age 18-65 who had a job at the time of recruitment.

Because of the specific interest in sensitivity and giftedness, a call for respondents was also sent out in the network of the Flanders association for HSP (HSP Vlaanderen), to members of Mensa in both the Netherlands and Belgium. Also a call for respondents was placed in the newsletter of the gifted adults foundation (IHBV) in the Netherlands.

Mensa

Mensa is the international high IQ society with members in more than 100 countries. Members have scored in the 98th percentile or higher on a standardized IQ test. This score is often used as an objective measurement to define a person to be gifted although giftedness comprises more than only intelligence, as described in the introduction.

HSP Vlaanderen

HSP Vlaanderen is an organization in Belgium to inform, support and guide (possibly) highly sensitive adults, adolescents and children, as well as the parents of (possibly) highly sensitive children. Proof of being HSP is not required for membership.

IHBV

IHBV is an organization for knowledge, projects and networking meant to improve life for gifted and talented adults in the Netherlands.

For this study, the results of participants that registered in the period October 2014 - September 2015 were used. In that period, a total of 2073 users registered. The dataset was anonymized and records of users who only registered but did not start the test were removed (261 records). Also, users who did start, but did not finish all questionnaires were removed (174 records). This resulted in a dataset of 1638 respondents.

Of all 1638 participants, 361 were male (22%), 1277 female (78%). Concerning type of employment, 235 (14%) were self-employed, and 1403 participants were gainfully employed. Most of the participants worked full-time: 994 (61%) and 644 participants (39%) worked part-time. Table 1 gives an overview of the age-distribution of male and female participants.

Table 1

Overview of age distribution of the participants in this study

Age	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
18-25	11 3	52 4	63 4
26-35	87 24	408 32	495 30
36-45	123 34	464 36	587 36
46-55	98 27	276 22	374 23
56-65	42 12	77 6	119 7
Total	361 100	1277 100	1638 100

The participants were also asked to provide their highest level of education. These have been categorized in four classes. See Table 2 for an overview.

Table 2

Overview of highest level of education of the participants in this study

Level of education	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Lower secondary	21 6	24 2	45 3
Higher secondary	56 16	141 11	197 12
Higher education	140 39	611 48	751 46
University	144 40	501 39	645 39
Total	361 100	1277 100	1638 100

Procedure

After registration on the website and providing the demographical information, the participants were asked to complete 13 questionnaires without knowing the specific purpose of each questionnaire.

For the overall study, respondents were also asked to complete some questionnaires for a second and third time. For this present study, only the responses of the first round were used.

Instruments

For this study the demographical questions and two questionnaires were used.

Demographical information

The following demographical variables were asked: age, sex, year of birth, current family situation, number of children, highest education, profession, part-time or full-time employed, independent or gainfully employed. Also the participants were asked whether they identified themselves as being gifted.

HSP Scale

This questionnaire with 27 questions measures if a person is HSP and has been developed by Aron and Aron (1997). One point is scored for every question a participant responds 'Yes' to. A person is considered to be HSP if more than 14 points are scored. The Dutch translation was made with certified translators under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Bijttebier and Prof. Dr. Elke van Hoof in 2014 (see appendix A).

Overexcitabilities Questionnaire-II (OEQ-II)

This questionnaire has been developed by Falk, Lind, Miller, Piechowski and Silverman (1999) and has been translated by Van den Broeck, Hofmans, Cooremans and Staels of the University of Brussels (2014).

On 50 1-5 Likert scale questions, respondents indicate which values describe them best. This way, the scores on the five overexcitabilities are determined. Each OE is questioned 10 times. The total score per category is divided by 10 to get the score per OE (see appendix B).

Data-analyses

Data-analyses were executed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 22 and MS Excel.

A respondent was categorized as Gifted Adults (GA) when he or she responded 'yes' to the question "Are you gifted?" in the demographical information section. By this self-nomination, 245 out of 1638 respondents (14%) are considered to be GA.

A respondent was categorized as Highly Sensitive Person (HSP) based on the answers to Aron and Aron's HSP-scale (1997). When the total score was higher than 14, a respondent was considered to be HSP. By this measurement, 1311 out of 1638 (80%) scored HSP.

Out of the 245 GA, 214 scored HSP (87%). In Table 3 GA, HSP and their co-occurrence is shown.

Table 3
GA and HSP in this dataset

	HSP	nHSP	Total
GA	214	31	245
nGA	1097	296	1393
Total	1311	327	1638

T-tests (independent samples) were executed on the questionnaires investigating Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities for both HSP and GA.

The Bonferroni-correction was used to counteract the problem of multiple comparisons. The level of significance was lowered to 0,01.

Results

Considering the *first* research question regarding the relationship between high giftedness and HSP “How many GA are HSP?” this study shows that 87% of the GA score HSP on Aron and Aron’s (1997) HSP Scale (214 out of 245).

The *second* research question was: “How do GA score compared to nGA on Dabrowski’s overexcitabilities?” The results show significant scores on three out of five OE’s, namely on the sensual, the imaginal and the intellectual overexcitability. On these OE’s, GA’s score significantly higher than nGA’s (Table 4). The score on Emotional OE is considered not to be significant after Bonferroni correction (level of significance set on: 0,01).

Table 4

t-test independent samples GA and nGA scores on Dabrowski’s Overexcitabilities

	GA	Number	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Psychomotor OE	nGA	1393	3,043	-1,020	,308
	GA	245	3,099		
Sensual OE	nGA	1393	3,661	-5,335	,000
	GA	245	3,913		
Imaginational OE	nGA	1393	2,723	-5,100	,000
	GA	245	2,993		
Intellectual OE	nGA	1393	3,825	-13,026	,000
	GA	245	4,294		
Emotional OE	nGA	1393	3,905	-2,426	,016
	GA	245	4,011		

On the *third* research question “Do HSP adults (independent of their possible giftedness) score different on Dabrowski’s overexcitabilities than non-HSP adults?” the following was found. On all five Overexcitabilities HSP score significantly different than nHSP. On the psychomotor OE they score significantly lower and on the other 4 OE’s they score significantly higher (see Table 5).

Table 5

t-test independent samples HSP and nHSP scores on Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities

	HSP	Number	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Psychomotor OE	nHSP	327	3,159	2,750	,006
	HSP	1311	3,025		
Sensual OE	nHSP	327	3,118	-14,921	,000
	HSP	1311	3,843		
Imaginational OE	nHSP	327	2,264	-15,487	,000
	HSP	1311	2,888		
Intellectual OE	nHSP	327	3,667	-7,534	,000
	HSP	1311	3,952		
Emotional OE	nHSP	327	3,314	-19,513	,000
	HSP	1311	4,072		

The *fourth* research question was: "Do GA who are also HSP, score differently on the overexcitabilities than GA who are non-HSP?" No significant difference was found on the psychomotor overexcitability, but on the other four the GA who are also HSP score significantly higher than the GA who are non-HSP (see Table 6).

Table 6

t-test independent samples GA-HSP and GA-nHSP scores on Dabrowski's OE's

	GA-HSP	Number	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Psychomotor OE	GA-nHSP	31	3,071	-,198	,843
	GA-HSP	214	3,103		
Sensual OE	GA-nHSP	31	3,432	-4,525	,000
	GA-HSP	214	3,982		
Imaginational OE	GA-nHSP	31	2,577	-3,571	,000
	GA-HSP	214	3,053		
Intellectual OE	GA-nHSP	31	4,019	-3,338	,001
	GA-HSP	214	4,334		
Emotional OE	GA-nHSP	31	3,284	-7,799	,000
	GA-HSP	214	4,116		

Conclusion and discussion

Aron and Aron (2006) state that 15 to 20% of all people are HSP. The results in this study show 87% of the GA are HSP. A relationship between giftedness and sensitivity can therefore be concluded.

Similar to some of Falk and Miller's (2009) conclusions, in this study GA outscore nGA adults on all five OE's, but only three of them significantly: on the Sensual OE, the Imaginational OE and the Intellectual OE. No significance in the scores on the Psychomotorical OE – similar to Winkler's analysis - and after Bonferroni-correction neither on the Emotional OE. So this study confirms these results also for working adults.

New in this study was the analysis of any relation between Dabrowski's (1964, 1972) OE and Aron and Aron's HSP Scale. On all five OE's significant differences between HSP and nHSP were found. Remarkable is the significant lower score on the psychomotorical OE.

Psychomotorically overexcitable persons are described to be highly-energetic, curious, have difficulty sitting still, need constant change of scenery, and are generally restless. Elaine Aron also identified the so called 'High Sensation Seekers' (HSS) and describes them as thrill seeking HSP's. But this is backed up by less research than the HSP scale (Aron, 2006). Seeing some similarities in the words describing these HSS and the psychomotor OE, one could raise the question if there is a relation. This would require further research.

Zooming in on the GA and their sensitivity, GA-HSP outscored GA-nHSP on all five OE's but on the Psychomotorical OE the difference was not significant. So within the group of gifted adults, it can be concluded that the highly sensitive ones (87%) are generally more overexcitable than the non-HSP gifted adults. Could it be that the relationship between giftedness and OEs needs to be seen in the context of HSP?

Giftedness itself was not measured within this study. The participants were asked “Are you gifted. Y/N?”. No additional questions were asked to support this answer. Therefore a more nuanced way to describe the Gifted Adults in this study would be: “Adults that identify themselves as being gifted”. This means that the group GA could contain false-positives, and the nGA group could contain false-negatives. This could be seen as a limitation of this study.

As stated in the theoretical introduction, the different definitions regarding giftedness all say being gifted means more than just having a high IQ. So even if an IQ-test was included in this study, this would not have identified the gifted adults fully. It would have only selected the participants that were able to perform well on the IQ-test. One might argue if an IQ-test is a sufficient measurement of a person’s giftedness. Mental health professionals working with gifted people (both children and adults) see a lot of problems in performance when gifted individuals are being observed, timed or under any other pressure (Jackson, 2015). We know underachieving is a problem when gifted persons are not recognized and do not receive specific guidance in their developmental process.

Could it be that their HSP is of great influence on that? Could it be that studies into excellent performing children, the IQ-tested children, like the previous mentioned Terman (1925-1967) studies and the studies into the mathematically precocious youth (Stanley, 1972-1997), did not see any reason to investigate a relation to high sensitivity because most of the highly sensitive ones were already excluded at the entrance? Because they had to peak perform before being included in the research programs as being gifted?

This is a very difficult issue. Both groups studying the gifted, the ones in mental healthcare working with gifted persons with (mental) problems and psychologists and educationalists studying the excellent-performing gifted persons, seem to have a blind spot for their selection. They both exclude a part of the gifted population. The mental health care professionals do not

see many peak performing gifted individuals in their practices; they see the ones with challenges in their daily life, like mental problems and performance issues. The scientists working with the individuals that score in the 98th percentile on IQ-tests, might have excluded very gifted persons that were too nervous or stressed to deliver a performance matching their intelligence. So both investigated samples may not fully represent the gifted population.

This study might just have a more representative sample of gifted adults. The participants of this study were not selected or investigated because of mental health issues or because of high performance and/or IQ-scores. Everybody with a job, either gainfully or self-employed was invited to participate and they could determine themselves if they identify themselves as being gifted.

There is another possible limitation to be mentioned is the use of Aron and Aron's (1997) short questionnaire for determining HSP. Aron herself also introduced a questionnaire with a Likert scale instead of the yes/no version used in this study. But research by Van Hoof (personal communication) shows no differences in results in using either one. A second remark to be made on the use of Aron's questionnaire is: how well does this questionnaire measure HSP? Although the trait HSP itself is well accepted within today's world of psychology, the way to measure it is not yet fully developed.

Relevance

Why is it important for gifted adults to know whether they are highly sensitive and/or overexcitable?

Giftedness and HSP in itself are two positive traits. But they do not automatically lead to a rich and fulfilling life. Being aware of these traits will help people with these traits to explain the differences they experience compared to people that do not possess these traits.

Dabrowski's (1964, 1972) OE's in relation to giftedness provide an explanation for behavior in gifted children and adults that is often misdiagnosed with disorders such as ADHD, ODD, Bipolar, OCD, or Autism. Sometimes this leads to inappropriate counseling and or unneeded medication (Webb, Amend, Webb, Goerss, Beljan, & Olenchak, 2005).

From Gagné's (2012) model we know that abilities (gifts) can become competencies (talents) through a positive developmental process. Sensitivity acts as a catalyst on that process. If not identified as being gifted or highly sensitive, negative coping strategies might be developed and these are of negative influence on the development process. Developing proactive, positive coping strategies, and good self-regulation support the realization of one's (full) potential.

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Appendices

Appendix A: HSP Scale, Aron and Aron (1997)

Translation by Van Hoof and Bijttebier.

Geef aan of u het eens bent met onderstaande uitspraken.

		Mee eens	Niet mee eens
1	Ik word gemakkelijk overweldigd door sterke zintuiglijke prikkels.		
2	Ik word mijn omgeving gewaar in al zijn subtiliteiten.		
3	De stemmingen van andere mensen beïnvloeden me.		
4	Ik heb de neiging nogal gevoelig te zijn voor pijn.		
5	Tijdens drukke dagen merk ik dat ik behoefte heb om me terug te trekken in mijn bed, in een verduisterde kamer of op een andere plek waar ik wat privacy heb en beschermd ben tegen prikkels.		
6	Ik ben bijzonder gevoelig voor de effecten van cafeïne.		
7	Ik word gemakkelijk overweldigd door dingen als fel licht, sterke geuren, grove weefsels of sirenes dichtbij.		
8	Ik heb een rijke en complexe belevingswereld.		
9	Harde geluiden zorgen ervoor dat ik me ongemakkelijk voel.		
10	Ik word diep geraakt door kunst of muziek.		
11	Soms worden mijn zenuwen zo op de proef gesteld dat ik me even moet afzonderen.		
12	Ik ben gewetensvol.		
13	Ik schrik gemakkelijk op.		
14	Ik voel me opgejaagd wanneer ik veel moet doen in korte tijd.		

15	Wanneer mensen zich in een fysieke omgeving niet op hun gemak voelen, weet ik meestal wat nodig is om het voor hen aangenamer te maken (bijvoorbeeld de verlichting of het meubilair aanpassen).		
16	Ik raak geërgerd wanneer mensen proberen me te veel dingen tegelijk te laten doen.		
17	Ik doe erg mijn best te voorkomen dat ik fouten maak of dingen vergeet.		
18	Ik kijk bewust niet naar gewelddadige films of tv-programma's.		
19	Ik word op een onaangename manier geprikkeld wanneer er veel om me heen gebeurt.		
20	Als ik sterke honger heb, verstoort dat erg mijn concentratievermogen of mijn gemoedstoestand.		
21	Veranderingen in mijn leven maken me overstuur.		
22	Ik heb een fijne neus voor delicate of fijne geuren, smaken, geluiden en kunstwerken en geniet ervan.		
23	Ik vind het onaangenaam als er veel tegelijk gebeurt.		
24	Het is voor mij een prioriteit om mijn leven zo te organiseren dat situaties die me van streek maken of overweldigend vermeden worden.		
25	Intense prikkels, zoals harde geluiden of chaotische toestanden, vind ik hinderlijk.		
26	Als ik bij het uitvoeren van een taak met iemand moet wedijveren of door iemand geobserveerd word, word ik zo nerveus of trillerig dat ik het veel minder goed doe dan ik anders zou doen.		
27	Toen ik een kind was, leken mijn ouders en leerkrachten me gevoelig of verlegen te vinden.		

Appendix B: Overexcitabilities Questionnaire-II (OEQ-II),

This questionnaire has been developed by Falk, Lind, Miller, Piechowski & Silverman (1999) and has been translated by Van den Broeck, Hofmans, Cooremans and Staels of the University of Brussels (2014).

Duid bij elke uitspraak het antwoord aan dat het beste bij u past. Antwoord zoals u nu bent en NIET zoals u zou willen zijn of denkt te moeten zijn. Omcirkel het nummer van het antwoord dat het best weergeeft hoe u zichzelf ziet.

- 1 : zo ben ik helemaal niet
- 2 : zo ben ik meestal niet
- 3 : zo ben ik een beetje
- 4 : zo ben ik dikwijls
- 5 : zo ben ik helemaal

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Ik dagdroom graag					
2	Ik ben competitief					
3	Ik vind de verscheidenheid van kleuren en geluiden zalig					
4	De wereld die ik me inbeeld is heel echt voor mij					
5	Ik ben een onafhankelijk denker					
6	Ik voel de gevoelens van anderen aan					
7	Het geeft me voldoening als een activiteit me fysiek uitput					
8	Als ik naar kunst kijk, dan vergeet ik alles rond mij					
9	Ik maak me dikwijls zorgen					
10	Ik ben graag in beweging					
11	Als ik in een groep iemand alleen zie staan, dan maakt me dat verdrietig					
12	Ik kan moeilijke ideeën omzetten naar iets dat makkelijker te begrijpen is					
13	Ik geniet heel erg van kunstwerken die door anderen gemaakt werden					
14	Als ik me verveel, begin ik te dagdromen					

15	Als ik veel energie heb, dan wil ik iets echt fysiek doen					
16	Ik stel alles in vraag: hoe dingen werken, wat ze betekenen, waarom dingen zijn zoals ze zijn					
17	Ik kan zo gelukkig zijn dat ik zou willen lachen en huilen tegelijkertijd					
18	Ik heb meer energie dan de meeste mensen van mijn leeftijd					
19	Ik kan tot een nieuw idee komen door een aantal, verschillende dingen bij elkaar te brengen					
20	Soms doe ik alsof ik iemand anders ben					
21	Hoe langer ik moet stil zitten, hoe onrustiger ik word					
22	De dingen die ik me in mijn hoofd voorstel, zijn zo levendig, dat ze echt lijken voor mij					
23	Ik observeer en analyseer alles					
24	Ik betrap er mijzelf op dat ik waarheid en fantasie door elkaar haal in mijn gedachten					
25	Theorieën zetten me aan het denken					
26	Mijn gevoelens van plezier, woede, opwinding en wanhoop kunnen hevig zijn					
27	Muziek voel ik in heel mijn lichaam					
28	Ik hou ervan om de werkelijkheid uit te vergroten(overdrijven					
29	Ik heb het gevoel dat mijn lichaam constant in beweging is					
30	Ik los graag problemen op en ik ontwikkel graag nieuwe ideeën					
31	Ik ben erg begaan met anderen					
32	Ik geniet meer van de kleur, vorm en textuur van dingen dan andere mensen					
33	Ik geloof dat poppen, opgezette dieren of de personages in boeken echt leven en gevoelens hebben					
34	Woorden en geluiden veroorzaken ongewone beelden in mijn hoofd					
35	Als ik hevige emoties heb, begin ik te huilen					
36	Ik ga graag dieper in op problemen en onderwerpen					
37	Ik word geraakt door schoonheid in de natuur					

38	Ik ben niet gevoelig voor de kleur, vorm en textuur van dingen, zoals sommige mensen wel zijn					
39	Als ik nerveus ben, dan moet ik iets fysiek doen					
40	Ik probeer mijn gedachten en gedrag te analyseren					
41	Ik kan een mengeling van verschillende emoties tegelijkertijd voelen					
42	Ik ben het type persoon dat steeds actief moet zijn: wandelen, poetsen, organiseren, bezig zijn					
43	Ik speel graag met ideeën en ik probeer een manier te vinden om ze in praktijk om te zetten					
44	Ik ben niet emotioneel					
45	Ik geniet heel erg van kleuren, vormen en patronen					
46	Ik vind het verschil in geuren en smaken (aroma's) interessant					
47	Ik heb aanleg om te fantaseren					
48	Ik luister graag naar de geluiden in de natuur					
49	Ik neem alles ter harte					
50	Intense fysieke activiteit, zoals bij sport en snelle spelletjes, doet me goed					