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Educators' Perceptions of Reasons for and Strategies to Correct the Underrepresentation of African Americans in Gifted Education Programs

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EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF REASONS FOR AND STRATEGIES TO

CORRECT THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN

GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

by

DEBORAH ANN MCKINNIE DUNN

(Under the Direction of Walter S. Polka)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine elementary and middle school educators' perceptions of the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

The mixed method paradigm included a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The two instruments used were an eight item interview questionnaire and a two page researcher-designed survey. The participants were selected based on the operation of their gifted eligibility teams from three selected elementary schools and twenty middle schools. Three elementary principals and three middle school principals were interviewed to gain an in-depth knowledge of the reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. Sixty-nine surveys were mailed to principals at three elementary schools and twenty middle schools of a large school system in metro Atlanta. The principals distributed the surveys to members of his or her school's gifted eligibility team. The survey assessed the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs based on the perceptions of principals and teachers.

The 31 respondents' surveys, a 44.9% return rate, were analyzed and indicated that reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education

programs consisted of the following: (1) African American culture does not value intellectual giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3) Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (5) Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (6) The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program; (7) Race causes African American students not to be nominated; (8) Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program; (9) Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students; (10) Test bias works against African American students; (11) Student unwillingness to participate in the program is problematic. As a result of the principals' interviews, nine strategies were formulated to address the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

INDEX WORDS: Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), No Child Left Behind Act 2001, Giftedness, Gifted Eligibility Team, Emotionally Disturbed (ED) Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all of my family members, friends, and students who prayed for and encouraged me during this tremendous educational journey. The completion of this dissertation is evidence that, through prayer, commitment, and perseverance, our dreams can become reality.   I thank my parents, Rogers and Ethel Richardson, and my grandparents, Hosea and Fannie Vidrine, for teaching me how to face challenges and for being optimistic in all situations. Thank you for sharing your love of teaching and life-long learning. I thank my in-laws, Freddie and Thelma Dunn, for their pursuit of excellence in education which helped to keep me focused during this educational journey.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During an interview, Dr. Mary M. Frasier described attitudes that create barriers for students underrepresented in gifted programs (Grantham, 2002):

> Things like poor kids and gifted programs just don't go together. I mean, I think that people in their heart of hearts really think that when kids are poor they can't possibly perform at the level of kids that are advantaged because they haven't had certain kinds of advantages in their home. There is such a cause-effect relationship in gifted programs that create barriers, you know, I call them my list of prerequisites to being gifted. You must have two parents; they must be college educated. You must be White. You must be in the suburbs. I know this sounds a little bit facetious, but if you look at the enrollment in gifted programs, it's not facetious. And any time you have those factors missing, then it is very difficult for people to grasp the whole issue of giftedness in other groups. (p. 50)

The underrepresentation of minorities, specifically African Americans, in gifted programs is the focus of many researchers (Ford, 1998; Ford, 2006; Ford & Grantham, 2003; Milner & Ford 2007; Naglieri & Ford, 2003; Polite & Davis, 1999; Strange, 2005; & VanTassel-Baska, Johnson, & Avery, 2002). The underrepresentation of minorities, specifically African Americans, may continue to be disproportionate until diversity is addressed through policy, identification, placement, and retention (Grantham, 2004a). If African Americans are not placed in gifted programs, then they are not being given equal access to these programs (Ford, 1996; Miller, 2004).

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* caused several national, state, and local politicians in the United States to push for accountability and performance-based standards. School districts are expected to meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) or be classified as failing schools. Teachers are accountable for their students' performance on standardized tests and their increased test scores in reading and mathematics (Moon, Brighton, & Callahan, 2003). Any student that is below the required test scores must have an individual learning plan developed by the teacher for student achievement improvement (Ford, 1998). Teachers are being challenged to utilize various teaching strategies in an attempt to meet the academic needs of every child in the classroom, which means that each child meets or exceeds the standard, which is grade-level proficiency (Hertzog, 2003).

School systems and administrators need to be aware of the legal, political, and social ramifications of not addressing cultural diversity (Grantham, 2003). The diverse student population is increasing very drastically and educators are preparing to meet their educational needs (Ford, 1998). School systems and administrators are finding ways to offer more staff development to teachers on cultural diversity and address this diversity issue (Ford & Harris, 1999). Equal access for minority students in the gifted programs may be achieved by addressing the issues of testing, placement, and other obstacles that have blocked minority students from entering into the gifted programs (Ford, 1996; Miller, 2004). Historically, gifted students from minority populations are not represented in gifted programs in the same percentage that they exist in the overall population of the United States (Ford, 1996; Maker, 1986; Marland, 1972). The state of Georgia has been a pioneer in the development of multiple criteria guidelines for gifted identification to

help increase the numbers of underrepresented minority students in the state's gifted programs regardless of status, income, social class, or background (Williams, 2000). This has been a great event in the history of gifted education to include students with abilities and gifts that are different from the traditional gifted student (Williams).

Background of the Study

Giftedness

According to Jolly (2005), a historical perspective of gifted education is necessary to properly recognize and understand the developments in the field of gifted education currently being investigated. Galton, Binet, Lombroso, Yoder, and Cattell are pioneers of gifted education who were investigated by Jolly (2005). Jolly's investigation found that Francis Galton, in 1865, did studies on intelligence (study of genius); Alfred Binet developed an intelligence test to measure feeblemindedness, which was also used to measure a child's intelligence; Cesare Lombroso is responsible for the negative stereotypes of gifted children, because of his link between genius and neurosis; Alfred Yoder studied the boyhoods of 50 great men in 1894, which was used for comparison; and James Cattell studied enumeration and order, which led to quantitative deduction and the use of probability theory (Jolly). These pioneers influenced the studies of Hollingworth, who used Binet's test to measure a child's intelligence and Terman, who extended Binet's work (Jolly).

In 1964 Georgia and Pennsylvania were the only two states to mandate programs and services for the gifted, which was a full eight years before the 1972 Marland Report (Ford & Harris, 1999). Georgia's multiple criteria changed a practice of gifted identification that had been two-dimensional for over thirty years. This criteria used IQ

tests and achievement scores, then changed to a multi-dimensional criteria that included creativity and motivation (Williams, 2000). According to Dr. Sally Krisel, Georgia led the way in multiple criteria for identification and became a model for the rest of the country (Personal communication, March 9, 2006).

The definition of giftedness is constantly evolving along with the identification process. In 2006 there were three important definitions of giftedness. The first is defined in the Javits Act (1988), which states that "The term gifted and talented students means children and youth who give evidence of higher performance capability in such areas as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools in order to develop such capabilities fully." Another definition used by the U. S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) in 1993 dropped "gifted" and used the term "outstanding talent" in its definition; "Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor." This definition is very different from the first federal definition that was stated in the 1972 Marland Report (Ford & Harris, 1999). Finally, the National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC, 2005) states that gifted learners are "Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop these capabilities."

Based on the various definitions above, it became necessary for teachers and administrators to review current research in the field of gifted education in order to be

prepared to identify, test, teach, and retain the current and future multicultural students in gifted education (Ford & Harris, 1999). As the views of giftedness moved from traits to productive accomplishments, then the implications for the identification process and curriculum development and program evaluations were born (Maker, 1986). Silverman called our attention to the biased prospective of the identification process and the definitions of giftedness (Maker, 1986).

According to Ford and Harris (1999) the shortcomings in gifted education were recently reviewed due to a perceived strength of the Japanese educational system and in the past because of the possible "threats" of the Soviet Union and Sputnik. The United States wanted to improve the achievement of highly capable students as compared to other countries, and as a result gifted students became recipients of major curricular reform in 1958 (Ford & Harris, 1999).

According to Hamovitch (1999) in an ethnographic study of the experiences of nine high-ability female urban students in a northeastern urban high school, the students achieved regardless of culture. The nine high-achieving girls, who participated in the two and a half year study, included three African-Americans, three Hispanics, and three Caucasians, between 10th and 12th grades. The participants' support group was a community of achievers within the large urban high school whose efforts helped the target group to achieve. Each of the participants was internally motivated, independent, realistic, involved in school activities, experienced family and peer support, and appreciated cultural diversity (Hamovitch, 1999).

Kornhaber (1999) performed a qualitative study, which included interviews, observations, and documentary data to investigate three alternative assessments,

DISCOVER, PSA, and the Gifted Model Program, which used multiple intelligences

(MI) to increase the identification of under-served children. The three assessments were

used to study students from different populations; first grade and fifth grade, who were

Navajo Indians on a reservation, African Americans in Charlotte, North Carolina, and a

diverse group in Montgomery County, Maryland (Kornhaber). The three assessments

used made the framework possible and helped to increase access to more challenging

curricula for the under-served students and resulted in the following key questions: Are

the classrooms of the affluent and White youngsters representative of the classrooms of

the poor and minority students? Is there anything else that educators can do to ensure fair

identification and challenging curriculum for the underrepresented gifted young students?

Analyzed against a framework of eight criteria, none of the assessments met all eight

criteria, and each met a different subset of the eight criteria (Kornhaber).

According to the National Association of Gifted Children (2005), the current

criteria for identification included nomination by a teacher, parent, or the student. There

are various instruments used for student assessment, which look at aptitude, achievement,

creativity, and motivation. A developed student assessment profile may also be used.

All identification instruments and procedures must be based on current research. Written

procedures for identification often include informed consent, student retention, student

reassessment, student exiting procedures, and appeals procedures. The criteria for gifted

programs constantly change, and differ among states and districts (NAGC, 2005).

Teacher Recommendations of Culturally Diverse Students

In a literature review, teacher recommendation or non-recommendation of

culturally diverse students emerged as a major reason why minority students have been

underrepresented in gifted education programs. Black males need to be identified early,
because the longer they are in school the lower their test scores drop, which often results
in non-recommendation (Polite & Davis, 1999). The identification process of gifted
students often begins with the classroom teacher. Many educators interpret differences as
deficits, disadvantages as dysfunctions, and identify the diverse students as *at-risk* or
recommend them to the *Special Education Program* (Ford, Moore III, & Milner, 2005).
Hence, the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education and the
overrepresentation of minorities in Special Education.

In the past and even today, deficit thinking has contributed to beliefs about race,
culture, and intelligence, according to Gould (1981, 1995) and Menchaca (1997). As
school districts faced increased diversity, many educators used standardized tests that
were based on American culture and English proficiency, rather than on intelligence,
which is noted by Gould (1995), Hilliard (1992), and others. Some educators argued that
underrepresentation of culturally diverse students is done purposely to perpetuate school
segregation (e.g., Ford & Webb, 1995; Hilliard, 1992).

Concerns of African American Students

Many African American students are underrepresented because they and their
families have chosen not to participate in the gifted programs due to social-emotional
concerns (Ford, 2004b). Some of these concerns are negative peer pressures (Ford,
1992, 1996; Fordham, 1988, 1991, 1996; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986), resulting in alienation
from White students in their gifted classes, isolation from their African American friends,
and accusations of *acting white* by their African American peers.

Self-concept and self-esteem have been proven to affect the academic achievement of students, but for students who are gifted and ethnically diverse there is a phenomenon called racial identity development that also affects their academic achievement (Grantham & Ford, 2003). Gifted African American students have specific psychological needs that must be addressed by educators and counselors if they are to achieve academic success (Grantham, 2004a). Particular attention to identification and achievement issues, which are based on the most widely researched theory of racial identity development, suggested counseling interventions were appropriate for use with gifted African American students (Cross, 1971, 1995; Cross & Vandiver, 2001).

According to the *Handbook of Research on Educational Administration*, schools have many cultures, such as national cultures, department cultures, school cultures, and cultures of student cliques that compete with administrative efforts to shape the culture in a school. The gifted program may also be seen as a gifted culture of students and teachers. These programs may appear to be a type of racial segregation (Staiger, 2004). According to total quality management, as school systems and administrators address the problem of cultural diversity, it is necessary to remember that change is inevitable, and, therefore, it is necessary for schools to ensure continual school improvement in order to meet the demands of a changing society (Richardson, Blackbourn, Ruhl-Smith, & Haynes, 1997).

An effective educational leader is intelligent, ethical, a visionary, and an excellent communicator. This leader is knowledgeable about various leadership styles and is flexible enough to change when the situation requires it. Curriculum and instruction, as well as management, are areas of competence for the successful educational leader. The

principal is not the only educational leader in the school, but he or she is the primary

educational leader in the school community. The major objective of all effective

educational leaders is to increase student achievement (Sergiovanni, 2001).

Testing and eligibility are two areas in which the educational leader is required to

be knowledgeable (Sergiovanni, 2001). A gifted coordinator from a large urban school

system in Georgia, explained that the eligibility team of each school includes at least one

school leader, the gifted liaison, another teacher, and possibly a counselor (Personal

communication, June 2, 2006). All members of the committee should be knowledgeable

about the Georgia gifted eligibility criteria.

There is also a debate concerning the nature of intelligence. Is intelligence static

or dynamic? Is intelligence genetic and inherited, or is it relative to environment? The

nature-nurture debate is long-lived and is still current (Grantham, 2004a). African

Americans are in the middle of the nature-nurture debate, and some authors conclude that

African Americans are intellectually inferior, while others state that the standardized tests

are the problem (Ford & Grantham, 2003).

Teachers are becoming more culturally diverse because of the increased number

of people from culturally different backgrounds, but they are strangers (Ford, Moore III,

& Milner, 2005). According to Ford, Moore III, and Milner (2005), gifted educators go

beyond the statement, "what is valued and viewed as gifted in one culture may not be

considered gifted in another culture" and seek to really understand and define culture for

a diverse population. Now, teachers are going beyond culture blindness, which is an

unrealistic attempt not to see cultural differences, to understanding cultural diversity and

incorporating it into the education process (Ford, Moore III, & Milner, 2005). In 2000

diverse students comprised about 30% of the U. S. population, but 84.3% of the teachers were White according to the U. S. Department of Education (USDE, 2000). The population of culturally diverse students is expected to increase greatly, but an expected decrease in minority teachers will occur because many minorities are not choosing teaching as a profession (Cross & Vandiver, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

The definition and identification processes in gifted education have been constantly changing in American public schools due to the introduction of new policies and the changing demographics of the United States. Even though the population has become more diverse and the identification process in gifted education has moved from one-dimensional to multiple criteria, minority students from diverse cultures and various socioeconomic backgrounds have continued to be underrepresented in gifted education programs. After thirty years of using only standardized tests to identify gifted students, a multiple criteria identification process was developed by the state of Georgia to meet the identification needs of a more diverse population, specifically African American children; however, educators have continued to overlook giftedness in these students.

The purpose of this study was to determine elementary and middle school educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

Research Questions

The researcher proposed to answer the following overarching question in this study:

What are educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Sub questions answered in this study are as follows:

1. To what extent do principals agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

2. To what extent do teachers agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

3. To what extent do principals and teachers agree on the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

4. What strategies do educational leaders believe are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Significance of the Study

Many researchers have demonstrated an interest in the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education programs, and it has been listed as a "hot topic" on the National Association of Gifted Children's website. Therefore, the researcher believes that this study will add to the field of knowledge concerning the definition of giftedness. The researcher further believes that the findings will also help to improve the identification process through the aid of various criteria needed in the development of tests and other evaluation instruments that consider minorities.

This is a significant study for gifted students, parents, teachers, gifted coordinators, principals, superintendents, policy makers, and school board members in the state of Georgia because of the pressures of accountability and student achievement exerted by *No Child Left Behind.* The pressure is exerted to increase the achievement of struggling minority students, but many gifted minority students are underachievers.

Therefore, the proper early identification of gifted minority students, specifically African Americans, will decrease the number of low achieving minority students.

This study is important to the researcher as a gifted certified African American teacher of gifted middle school students. Currently, the researcher's school has a significant gifted population. However, an underrepresentation of minorities, specifically African American students, exists in the researcher's classroom and school. This study will assist the researcher in identifying and using approved alternative methods to identify gifted minorities in the school. The results of this study will be shared with other gifted and non-gifted teachers and administrators, which will assist them in the identification process of gifted students as they serve on school gifted eligibility teams.

The researcher believes that policy makers can use the results of this study to aid in writing policies to help increase funding for gifted education based on the increased identification of underrepresented minority students. The policies would justify the need for gifted certified administrators (leaders) and training in the identification process using multiple criteria for all educators involved in gifted education.

This study provides school system's elementary and middle school eligibility teams with data to help increase the number of minorities, specifically gifted African-American students through the identification process. This study will also provide the school system's staff development department with data about the perceptions of administrators and teachers of the reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in the gifted education programs. It will also identify some strategies administrators can employ to address this problem. Policy makers may also use the data from this study for funding and accountability purposes.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the principals and teachers who make up the eligibility teams from elementary and middle schools and who are a representative sample of more than 7,000 teachers and principals in the school system. The data collected in this study may not be able to be generalized to other counties in Georgia because it was based upon a large urban school system.

Limitations

The lack of knowledge of the principals and teachers on the eligibility teams about the identification process of gifted students and the underrepresentation of African American students in the gifted programs in the state of Georgia and the large school system could limit the results of the study. The results of this study are limited to the responses and knowledge of the participants on the questionnaires about leadership and the gifted polices and procedures at the state and local levels.

Procedures

Design

A two-phase, mixed method study will examine factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education programs, specifically African Americans. In this study the views of educators, including administrators, which is qualitative, will be explored regarding the process and criteria used to identify, test, and retain minorities in the large school system's gifted education programs. The quantitative part of this study will be a comparison of the perceptions of the large school system's elementary and middle school principals and teachers of the reasons for the

underrepresentation of African Americans in the gifted education programs and the strategies that the principals employ to address this underrepresentation.

Population

The population consisted of all of the teachers and administrators in the state of Georgia. The sample participants were teachers and administrators from over 7,000 educators of the school system located in the metropolitan Atlanta area.

Sampling

The participants included principals, teachers, and administrators who served on the gifted eligibility teams in 3 elementary schools and 20 middle schools in the large school system. They were contacted by e-mail, telephone, and regular interoffice mail. The researcher contacted the school system's gifted coordinator and each school's principal at least one week prior to contacting the members of the gifted eligibility teams.

Instrumentation

Qualitative and quantitative data was collected using a total of 69 questionnaires. The researcher pilot tested the questionnaire using 8 elementary and middle school teachers (4 gifted certified and 4 non-gifted certified) and 4 administrators from schools who do not serve on gifted eligibility teams.

Data Analysis

The researcher collected and analyzed data obtained from the questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire were used to select 4 administrators and 4 teachers to be interviewed for more intense study. The school system's gifted coordinator was also interviewed. The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program to analyze the data from the questionnaire, as well as coding. The results were

used to examine the identification process employed by the large school system's elementary and middle schools' eligibility teams to identify gifted African American students.

The questionnaire was posed to the principals and members of the gifted eligibility teams in 3 elementary schools and 20 middle schools in the large school system. The researcher contacted non-respondents by e-mail, mail, telephone, and interoffice mail.

Definition of Terms

Gifted Eligibility Team: a team of certified staff members in each school required by Rule .38 (Multiple Criteria for Gifted). The eligibility team consists of the following members: administrator, teacher of gifted, certified gifted classroom teacher, and other certified staff members. This team meets to determine a student's eligibility for the gifted program by reviewing evidence gathered on referred students.

Gifted Coordinator: a system level administrator of gifted programs. Qualifications for the position are determined by the school superintendent and the local board of education and are reflected in the local school system administrative procedures for gifted education.

Gifted Student: a student who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability(ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities.

Gifted Teacher: personnel working full time as a teacher of the gifted, must hold a professional certificate prior to beginning work in the area of gifted and must meet certification requirements.

Summary

As a gifted educator in a large school system in Georgia for almost 10 years, I have experienced first hand the underrepresentation of minorities, specifically African American students. It was disappointing to teach in a school with an African American student population of approximately 42% and to have an African American gifted population of only 5%. Also, three out of the four teachers (75%) on the gifted team were African American, but our student population was about 90% Caucasian, 5% African American, and 5% Asian and others. As I looked at one of the largest middle schools in the system that had a student population of about 98% African American, the gifted population consisted of only about 2% of the student population. I have been observing the number of gifted students increase in the school system since 1998; however, the African American gifted student population does not appear to be growing proportionally with the rest of the student population.

Although Georgia has been on the cutting edge of the identification process for gifted education, the state continues to experience an underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education programs. This is even more ironic because of the fact that many nationally renowned educators in the field of gifted including Dr. Paul Torrance, Dr. Julian Stanley, and Dr. Mary Frasier, all called Georgia home. In 1997 Georgia implemented the multiple-criteria rule, which has resulted in a 206% increase in the number of African American students in Georgia's gifted programs, even though Georgia

continues to experience an underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs. Georgia's eligibility rule is used as a model for other states and for many policy makers. The identification process used by various school districts needs an annual evaluation by administrators on the state and local levels.

Gifted education administrators and leaders are advocates for gifted programs and recommend that policy makers request continued funding and even increased funding for gifted education programs. As the identification procedures have become more expensive and comprehensive, the funding and focus on gifted education by our policy makers are considerably below that of the other categories of special education. Research indicates that as funding for gifted education programs decreases, then so does the number of identified minority students decrease, especially African Americans.

The increased requirements of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) for accountability and student achievement have caused many school systems to provide increased assistance to struggling students, which has resulted in financial pressures on gifted education programs. In Georgia the primary focus of gifted education reform efforts for the last 10 years has been on programming and identification. However, the state uses self-reporting to collect data and evaluate each school district's practices and management of its gifted education program. A more reliable and efficient way of obtaining data on Georgia's gifted programs may help to decrease the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education programs.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Over the last twenty years American public schools have continued to become more diverse with more students of color in attendance; however, little has changed in the area of the underrepresentation of minority students, particularly African Americans, in gifted education programs. In this chapter the researcher will investigate the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs based on the reasons, administrators' roles, teachers' roles, and whatever strategies leaders employ to address the underrepresentation. Major findings in empirical research will be discussed surrounding the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education programs.

Reasons for Underrepresentation of African Americans

The persistent and pervasive underrepresentation of minority students represents a tragic and unnecessary waste of human potential and promise (Ford, p. 12). In 1992 the U. S. Office of Civil Rights (OCR) report indicated that 25,077,421 students were enrolled in the nation's public schools. African Americans were 21.1%, Whites were 60%, 13.7% were Hispanic American, 1% were American Indians, and 4% were Asian American. Of the 1,412,011 students identified as gifted, 12.1% were African American, 72.4% were White, 7% Asian American, 7.9% were Hispanic American, and .5% were American Indian. This is an African American underrepresentation of 41%, while Whites were overrepresented by 17%. This report brought about national concerns in regard to the underrepresentation of minority students in gifted education programs. The disparity of figures in this report was partly responsible for the Jacob K. Javits Gifted

and Talented Students Education Act of 1998. The goal of this act is to provide financial support to state and local educational agencies and to support the highest ability learners from underrepresented populations (Ford, 1998).

There are many reasons for the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education programs, which, according to Ford (1998), may be categorized as (a) recruitment issues: screening and identification (definitions, instrumentation, policies, and procedures), (b) retention issues (student-teacher, peer relations, and environment), and (c) personnel issues (teacher training and teacher expectation). Unless strategies are implemented to address these reasons, then underrepresentation of minorities, specifically African Americans, will continue to exist. The recruitment and retention of African American students in gifted education programs have continued to be of primary concern over the last few decades, but they continue to be overlooked. Therefore, Ford (1998) makes the following recommendations for recruiting and retaining minority students in gifted education programs: (1) use valid and reliable instruments, (2) collect multiple types and sources of information, (3) provide support services and educational opportunities, (4) provide extensive teacher and school personnel training, (5) increase family involvement, and (6) increase and refocus research and literature.   The author believes that underachievement and poor quality of schooling are factors that hide the potential of educationally disadvantaged students. It is not enough to focus research only on gifted education, but it must also be focused on special education, because African Americans are disproportionately represented in both areas.

In the 2003 study entitled *Challenges and Opportunities for Students Who Are Gifted: What the Experts Say,* Pfeiffer had 64 authorities in the gifted field respond to the

following five questions in a survey: (a) What do you see as the three greatest identification, assessment, and/or definitional issues in the gifted field? (b) What are the three most pressing unanswered questions in the gifted field? (c) What are the three most significant developments or innovations in gifted education in the last 5 years? (d) What do you see as the three greatest curricula, instruction, and/or program issues for the gifted students? and (e) What have been the three most important research findings in the last 5 years in the gifted field? The survey was piloted with three noted gifted authorities and questions were revised or eliminated based on their feedback. "Endorsement percentages," a simple statistic, were calculated on rank ordering to ease interpretation. The following four implications represent a consensus on the opportunities and challenges facing the gifted field: (a) How to conceptualize and define giftedness. (b) How to improve the identification process. (c) How to promote talent, and (d) Public policy issues. In the results, two categories each had 19 of the 64 experts (30%) endorsing Questionable Validity of Existing Instruments and Underrepresentation of Minority Group Students. In the previous two categories, the experts were concerned about the lack of predictive validity of measures, as well as the questionable reliability and construct validity for most tests. Sixteen of the experts (25%) endorsed the category "How to Increase the Number of Typically Underrepresented Groups of Gifted Students," in which the concerns were that a disproportionate number of children of color, economic disadvantage, or both, and the children who are linguistically different, female, from rural communities, or handicapped were not being adequately served. Since the student population is constantly changing due to culture shifts, economics, politics, and technology, the gifted field is also changing.

Black males are less likely to be recommended to participate in gifted education programs than are black females. Once black males are recommended for the gifted education program, there are certain factors that affect their decision to participate. Their decision not to participate in the gifted program will directly contribute to their underrepresentation in gifted education. According to Grantham (2004a), the decision not to participate is based on external and social influences, such as negative peer pressure. Racial identity, which is a psychological or internal issue, is also a major influence on the choice to participate in the gifted education program. The overrepresentation of African Americans in special education and the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs has also been a major concern. Grantham (2004a) presents multicultural mentoring as a strategy to increase Black male representation in gifted programs. The three key attributes that a mentor must understand in order to be a successful mentor to a gifted Black male mentee are commitment, love, and responsibility. The mentor should exemplify these attributes in words and deed, demonstrating that the mentor is committed to the mentee's success, no matter what, and will live a responsible life before the mentee. Love is the most important attribute that the mentor can put into action for the mentee, because the gifted Black male experiences many negative realities, such as feelings of isolation, withdrawal, and alienation. However, when gifted Black males are certain that their mentors are committed to their success, then their motivation to be successful and efforts to pursue advanced-level experiences increase (Grantham, 2004a).

The reasons for underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs continue to increase as the students in American schools become

more culturally diverse. Ford, Moore, and Milner (2005) identify testing issues, teacher referral issues, identity issues, social issues, and issues surrounding policies and procedures as contributing variables to the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted programs.   When educators and other decision makers experience "culture-blindness," they fail to acknowledge, affirm, and understand cultural differences among students. Culture-blindness is an unrealistic attempt not to see differences, which can cause children of color to appear invisible, because their strengths may be unseen, while their differences are ignored. They are also adding to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs.

The identification of African American students is constantly showing up in the literature as one of the major reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. In Clasen's 2006 13-year longitudinal study, she addresses identification and programming as critical issues related to underrepresented gifted students. The criteria for students identified to participate in Project STREAM (Support, Training and Resources for Education Able Minorities) were based on teachers' nominations of underachieving students, traditional, and nontraditional identifiers. Problem-solving ability and leadership skills were also recognized as indicators of giftedness. Project STREAM program had critical "Talent Search" elements similar to its conceptual model, Julian Stanley's Talent Search, which included early identification (sixth or seventh grade) of high-ability students, college explorations, fast-paced offerings, and commitment to assist students through high school. The findings support multiple forms of identification including grade point average, teacher identification, problem-solving, and teacher identification of leadership ability.

Administrators' Roles in the Underrepresentation of African Americans

It is a single person who encourages and develops leadership in others on the staff. That person is the principal. When the role is filled by a person with the requisite attributes and management skill, great things happen. When it is not, about the best that can be expected is a pleasant *status quo*, and the worst is a place where learner needs go unattended (Ubben and Hughes, 1997, p. xv.)

An effective educational leader is intelligent, ethical, a visionary, and an excellent communicator. This leader is knowledgeable about various leadership styles and is flexible enough to change when the situation requires it. Curriculum and instruction, as well as managing the organization, are required areas of competence for this educational leader. The principal is not the only instructional leader in the school, but he or she is the primary educational leader in the school community. The major objective of all effective educational leaders is student achievement. The Interstate School Leadership Consortium Standards for School Leaders (ISLLC) all state, "A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students (Sergiovanni, 2001, p. 25)."

The results of Grantham and Ford's (1998) study about the principal's instructional leadership role and the underrepresentation of Black (African American) students in gifted education programs found that the principal's leadership could make a difference in the representation of Black students in gifted education programs. The principal can have a positive effect on reversing underrepresentation by having a clear vision of instructional leadership that includes staff development, teacher supervision, quality control, and teacher evaluation. The research emphasized the principal's

instructional leadership role as a key component to improving the gifted programs, which is a part of school improvement. The principal's commitment to providing instructional leadership in gifted education requires answers to many questions such as, "How effective are teachers of gifted and advanced level programs in providing instruction that meets the needs of Black students?" As principals are included in the discussions of the underrepresentation of Black students in gifted programs, the schools can effectively address the problem and change the students' perceptions of the teachers and the gifted program.

Richard DuFour (2002) reflected on his years as a principal at Adlai Stevenson High School in Illinois and based on his experiences and data, he changed from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning. He played an important role in the process of shifting the school to learning focus instead of teacher focus. The expectations for both teachers and students at Stevenson were that all children would learn. DuFour became a leader of a professional community with a focus on learning, and he redefined his role to "lead learner." As an instructional leader the focus changes from intentions to results and from inputs to outcomes, which requires the instructional leader to promote teacher and student learning.

Ultimately principals are responsible for all students' achievements in their schools. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) discussed the following 21 responsibilities of leadership: (1) affirmation, (2) change agent, (3) contingent rewards, (4) communication, (5) culture, (6) discipline, (7) flexibility, (8) focus, (9) ideals/beliefs, (10) input, (11) intellectual stimulation, (12) involvement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (13) knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (14)

monitoring/evaluating, (15) optimizer, (16) order, (17) outreach, (18) relationships, (19) resources, (20) situational awareness, and (21) visibility. As the authors discuss these responsibilities of the principal, it is evident that teacher supervision and evaluation, quality control, and staff development are all essential in student achievement. These responsibilities are also necessary leadership traits in addressing the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

Teachers' Roles in the Underrepresentation of African Americans

Teachers are considered the gatekeepers for many students trying to enter into the gifted education programs (Ford, 2005). However, how well do they know and understand their students? Today America's public schools consist of a variety of children from all cultures, races, and nationalities. A large number of this diverse population includes children of color, disadvantaged, and low socioeconomic status. Are the teachers in America's public schools willing and able to give all students equity, access, and equality in their classrooms? Do they know and understand what giftedness looks like in any culture, ethnicity, or economic status?

In this study, the authors, Elhoweris, Mutua, Alsheikh, and Holloway (2005) examined the effect of students' ethnicity on teachers' referral and recommendation for placement in a gifted and talented program based on vignettes. All 207 elementary school teachers were chosen using stratified cluster sampling from 16 elementary schools in a large midwestern city. The racial composition was 83% European American and 92% women. One third of the teachers read a vignette describing an African American student, one third of the teachers read a vignette describing an European American student, and one third of the teachers received no information about the student's

ethnicity. The teachers responded to the two questions listed below, rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree):

A. This student should be referred for a comprehensive evaluation for possible placement in a gifted and talented student program.

    1. Strongly disagree   2. Disagree   3. Slightly disagree

    4. Slightly agree   5. Agree   6. Strongly agree

B. I feel this student should be placed in a gifted and talented student program.

    1. Strongly disagree   2. Disagree   3. Slightly disagree

    4. Slightly agree   5. Agree   6. Strongly agree

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences multivariate analysis of variance system (SPSS MANOVA) was used to analyze the between-subjects, and it resulted in a significant effect of student's ethnicity, such that, $F = 4.807$, $p \leq .05$. Teacher referral decisions were affected by student ethnicity. The data also showed that African American students were less likely to be referred by their teachers than nonlabeled students. This study suggests that there is, not only, a potential link between the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted and talented programs, but also teacher bias against them.

Ford and Milner (2005) discussed how racial experiences influence us as teachers. Dr. Ford shared her story about a typical beginning of a semester in a predominately White university. After introducing herself to her class a couple of times, there is still one student asking, "When will Dr. Ford be here?" Finally, the college student realizes that Dr. Ford really is the professor. Then Dr. Ford begins to teach and guide her students through the gifted curriculum, in which they navigate the course introduction

and overview, definition of giftedness, identification and assessment, testing instrument, social and emotional needs of gifted students, highly gifted students, and the gifted education curriculum. In this course the author will continue with curriculum. Only one or two of the students are minorities. Once the students have been made aware of their true racial feelings, they are ready to begin planning curriculum inclusive of diversity and multiculturalism. Students experience life differently depending on their ethnicity, culture, and economic status; therefore, the curriculum needs to be reflective of some of these diverse student experiences. It is also important that the person who is interpreting and implementing the curriculum focuses on the influences of race and culture. Since our classrooms are diverse, then our curriculum needs to be diverse. Milner and Ford challenge educators to rethink the gifted education curriculum and become self-reflective professionals, who see the value in developing diverse curricula and understand that teaching is not just a social process, but a cultural and personal process. It is not easy to become self-reflective practitioners, but it is worth the journey even with all of the roadblocks.

According to Milner and Ford (2007), it is very important for elementary teachers to identify and recommend elementary minority students to the gifted program as early as possible. As teachers gain insight into cultural competence, they will be able to recognize the strengths and potential in students of color. If students of color, specifically African Americans, are identified early in elementary school, there is a better chance to retain them in the gifted program. Teachers often misunderstand the experiences that are brought to the classrooms by students of color, which significantly affect how they are perceived by their teachers. However, if these elementary teachers

could connect with these gifted elementary students and place them in the gifted education program, then the underrepresentation of African Americans could start to be reversed. It appears that until African American students reach fourth grade, they are engaged in learning. The teachers are the key players in the recruitment and retention of culturally diverse gifted students (Milner and Ford, 2007). Diverse students do bring experiences, as well as strengths and weaknesses, to the classroom, and teachers need to acknowledge them.

<div align="center">Strategies to Address the Underrepresentation</div>

Educational leaders need to use their responsibilities of teacher evaluation and supervision, staff development, and quality control to help reverse the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education programs (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). The principals need to create a positive perception about schools and the gifted programs so that students and teachers will value them, and African American students will want to participate. Educational administrators need to get parents involved in the identification process in order to learn about the African American student's strengths and weakness.

Teachers need to include culture and diversity in the curriculum that they are planning, implementing, and teaching, so that African American students will feel valued and represented (Milner and Ford, 2005). Students perceive their teachers based on their responses to them in the classroom; therefore, if the students do not feel accepted and valued, they could have a negative perception of the teacher. It is mandatory that the principal make teachers accountable for what they are teaching in the classroom. Therefore, the principal becomes more learning focused rather than teacher focused, and

this will improve the students' achievement, because the focus is on outcome rather than input and on results instead of intentions (DuFour, 2002).

Empirical Research

The purpose of the ethnographic case study conducted by Hamovitch (1999) was to gain information about the experiences of nine high-ability female urban students' achievements. This study was born out of a larger three-year study of thirty-five ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged talented high school students in an urban high school. The perceptions of students, administrators, and teachers were investigated to determine how some academically talented high school students achieve at high levels in urban schools. It is also necessary to understand what factors contributed to their success and why these high-risk talented females succeeded despite adversity and social-emotional issues. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What factors do high achieving female students identify as influencing their academic achievement in an urban high school?

2. What relationships and support systems shape the behaviors, attitudes, and aspirations of high-achieving female students in an urban environment?

The nine high-ability, high-achieving girls who were identified to participate in this study included three African-Americans, three Hispanics, and three Caucasians between 10th and 12th grades. Two researchers observed the participants over a 2½ year period for 180 days in the school and the community. Observation and interview data were collected from academic, social, and athletic settings. Data collection methods included in-depth interviews with the students, administrators, teachers, school counselors, parents, coaches, siblings, community members, and other parties. Personal

perceptions and experiences of the female students were obtained from the students using a combination of qualitative methods, such as participant observations and case studies.

During the data analysis, the participants were able to use both Spanish and English during the interviews because both researchers spoke Spanish. Very descriptive case studies were developed for each participant. The three types of coding that were used during the analysis procedure were open coding, selective coding, and axial coding. The researcher's analysis was challenged throughout the entire process in the form of a person who played "devils advocate."

The study concluded that the support group, which was a community of achievers in a large urban high school, was a major factor that contributed to the students' efforts to achieve. They all had a strong belief in self and were resilient. Each participant was internally motivated, independent, realistic, involved in school activities, experienced family and peer support, and appreciated cultural diversity. Romantic involvement or dating was not acceptable to these high-achieving female students, but they were very supportive of other achieving students. Many of the mothers had never entered the high school, but they were supportive and provided an environment that valued and protected their daughters' accomplishments. All of the participants wanted a career that would let them use their talents.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate three alternative assessments, which use multiple intelligences (MI) to increase the identification of under-served children. Kornhaber's (1999) investigation focused on two questions: (1) Is it reasonable to associate increases in the identification of under-served youngsters with

these assessments? (2) Is it reasonable to associate each assessment with the theory of multiple intelligences?

Three assessments from searches on a database demonstrated the use of multiple intelligences to test youngsters for the gifted education program. The following assessments granted the researcher access: DISCOVER III (Discovering Intellectual Skills and Capabilities while Providing Opportunities for Varied Ethnic Responses), Gifted Model program, and Problem Solving Assessment (PSA). The researcher gathered several data types from three classrooms in two schools. There was a triangulation of data gathered through observations, interviews, and documentation.

The data was analyzed to answer two main questions. The first question was analyzed based on five general conditions which must be in place: (1) children understand the tasks, (2) children do their best work, (3) assessors must have training, (4) clear scoring rubric, and (5) assessors' judgments are reliable. The second question was analyzed based on three "MI-specific" conditions which need to be met: (6) assessment broadened beyond traditionally tested linguistic, mathematical, and spatial abilities, (7) assessment must be "intelligent-fair", and (8) assessment must be domain-based (culturally valued practices). The data was coded and sorted for each of the eight conditions as to whether the data undermined the condition, supported the condition, or was relevant to the condition, but neither countervailing nor supportive.

Software programs, such as Folio Views Info base manager, aided in searching, coding, and sorting interviews and field note data. There was also software that allowed for recording data and manipulating it.

The findings were that the three sites were different based on the MI-specific and general conditions that they met. Because the tests were so new in the development, between 3 and 6 years, it is not reasonable to look for increases in identification of minority and poor students. DISCOVER and SPA did not meet the MI-specific conditions, which was surprising to the researcher.

Future possibilities of the three assessments will be investigated and the results of this analysis more closely reviewed. The three assessments made this framework possible and helped to increase access to more challenging curriculum for the under-served students. This research enhanced equity for the under-served students resulted in questions about whether the classrooms of the affluent and White youngsters are representative of the classrooms for poor and minority students? Is there anything else that we can do as educators to ensure the fair identification and challenging curriculum for the under-represented gifted young students?

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Although the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted programs has been investigated and studied for many years, there is still no one single solution to the problem. Studies by researchers such as, Ford, Pfeiffer, Grantham, Milner, Hamovitch, and Kornhaber, have all tried to identify the problem and the solution to reverse the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education. They found not just one problem, but multiple problems. There has not been just one possible solution, but multiple possible solutions. However, as the student population becomes more diverse, the problems change along with the possible solutions, but there are some problems and solutions that remain the same even after twenty years.

Teacher recommendations continue to be a major problem in many studies because the majority of students, specifically African American students, enter the gifted program based on teacher recommendation. That is why teachers are considered to be the gatekeepers to the gifted programs. They also can become part of the solution if they will learn to identify African American gifted and talented students early, which will help with recruitment and retention. This will help to change the student's perception of the teachers and the gifted program. However, principals need to change their focus from teachers to learners (DuFour, 2002).

The Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) study on leaders' responsibilities and Grantham's (2004a) study on mentors both mention commitment to the role of being a solution to the problem of underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. In each study the principal or the mentor is required to perform their assigned responsibilities in order to demonstrate the commitment to achieve a positive outcome. Leadership does make a difference in the underrepresentation in each of these studies.

In most of the reviews in this section, there is a need for African American students to be resilient, but that can only be done if someone has demonstrated an effort to assist them in a way that is different from the traditional. These students need to be met in familiar culture. Their experiences need to be validated, and they need to know that they are valued. Their strengths need to be identified, and they need to be acknowledged as individuals, not with cultural-blindness, but with cultural acceptance and inclusion in the curriculum planning and curriculum. This can all happen if the students are identified in the elementary school by their teachers and if their principals make the gifted program a positive experience. These students also need mentors to help

them build the background knowledge that they lack for the school curriculum. This can

be built into the curriculum by bringing in some of their experiences and strengths.

Therefore, everyone needs to become reflective and sensitive to other cultures and realize

that the American public school system is a combination of many cultures and very

diverse children of color who are a large part of that population of students. Once their

gifts and talents are identified, stimulated, and motivated in the gifted education

programs, then the reverse of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted

education may become one of the solutions to closing the achievement gap (Ford, 2006).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Mixed method research is the combined use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods which allows the researcher to have the best of both kinds of research. It is research in which the researcher combines qualitative and quantitative methods, approaches, techniques, language, or concepts into one study (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In this study the researcher combined a survey, which is quantitative, with interviews that are considered qualitative, hence the mixed method research approach. Using this mixed method approach gave the researcher an in-depth view of principals' perceptions about the reasons for and the strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

This mixed method study was designed to determine the reasons for the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education programs. The study investigated the elementary and middle school educators' perceptions of reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

Research Questions

The researcher purposed to answer the following overarching question in this study:

What are educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Sub questions answered in this study are as follows:

1. To what extent do principals agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

2. To what extent do teachers agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

3. To what extent do principals and teachers agree on the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

4. What strategies do educational leaders believe are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Design

A quantitative research design was used to gain knowledge of elementary and middle school educators' perceptions of reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. The researcher investigated the extent to which principals agreed upon the reasons of underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs, the extent to which teachers agreed, and then compared the principals' reasons and the teachers' reasons for the underrepresentation. The qualitative part of this research found some strategies that educational leaders believed were necessary to address the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

Population

The population of this study consisted of 69 public school employees who were principals and teachers from 3 elementary and 20 middle schools in a large urban school district. The schools were all part of a large metropolitan urban public school system that has an enrollment of over 100,000 students. The student enrollment in the elementary schools was about 60,000; in the middle schools, it was approximately 25,000, and in the

high schools, around 20,000. The elementary schools usually had an administrative staff of a principal and one or two assistant principals, depending on the student population. One building principal, three or four assistant principals, and several department chairpersons completed the leadership team of the high schools and middle schools.

<div align="center">Participants</div>

The 69 participants for this study consisted of principals and teachers from 3 elementary schools and 20 middle schools located in the metro Atlanta area. They included 3 elementary school principals, 20 middle school principals, 6 elementary teachers or certified staff members, and 40 middle school teachers or certified staff members. Principals for the in-depth interviews were selected from schools that had active gifted eligibility teams. The teachers were selected through purposeful sampling based upon whether or not they were part of the gifted eligibility team for their particular school. According to the Gifted Department's literature in this large urban public school district, each elementary and middle school should have a gifted eligibility team. It was the eligibility team's responsibility to review the recommendations of students to the gifted program and to determine whether or not the criteria to be placed in the gifted program had been achieved. The participants included members or possible members of the schools' gifted eligibility teams, which may be a principal, assistant principal, both gifted and non-gifted teachers, and another certified member of the staff.

<div align="center">Instrumentation</div>

Researchers such as Ford, Frazier, and Grantham have all designed many of their own questionnaires for research studies on African Americans in gifted education. After reviewing many studies about the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted

education programs, the researcher designed the survey specifically for this study. The advantage of using this researcher-designed survey was that it focused specifically on investigating educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Survey</div>

The survey (Appendix F) was a two-page document. The introductory paragraph informed the respondent that the survey was "designed to assess the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs based on the perceptions of principals and teachers in elementary and middle schools." Item 1 asked for "gender: female or male." Item 2 asked for "ethnicity: African American/Black, Asian, Hispanic, Anglo American/White, and Other." Item 3 asked for "school level: Elementary or Middle." Item 4 asked for "position at the school: Principal, Assistant Principal, Teacher, Counselor, or Other." Item 5 asked for "number of years in education: 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-10 years, 11-15 years, 15-16 years, 16-20 years, or 21 or more years." Item 6 asked for "subject you teach: English/LA, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Other." The purpose of obtaining information from these six questions was to draw a picture of each participant based on demographics.

Item 7 asked "gifted program at your school: yes or no." Item 8 asked "gifted certified: yes or no." Item 9 asked "teach in gifted program: yes or no." Item 10 asked "gifted eligibility team at your school: yes or no. Item 11 asked "member of gifted eligibility team: yes or no. Item 12 asked "number of people on gifted eligibility team: 1, 2, 3, or 4. The purpose of these five questions was to discover if the participant was gifted certified and his or her involvement in the gifted program.

Item 13 asked for "number of students enrolled in school: less than 500, 500-700, 701-900, 901-1000, 1001-1200, or more than 1200." Item 14 asked for "number of African Americans enrolled in school: less than 100, 100-300, 301-500, 501-700, 701-900, or more than 900." Item 15 asked for "number of students enrolled in gifted program: less than 25, 25-50, 51-100, 101-150, 151-200, or more than 200." Item 16 asked for, "number of African American students enrolled in gifted program: less than 5, 5-14, 15-24, 25-34, 35-45, or more than 45." Item 17 asked "need for gifted services: yes or no." Item 18 asked, "Are African American students underrepresented in the gifted program?: yes or no." The purpose of these six questions was to obtain an idea of the gifted program at the participant's school, the number of African Americans students being served, and if there was a belief of underrepresentation of African American students in the gifted program.

Participants were asked to respond on a four-degree scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree in items 19 through 29 about their perceptions of the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. Item 19 asked "culture does not value intellectual giftedness." Item 20 asked "definition of giftedness prohibits identification of minority students." Item 21 asked "identification process for admission into the program." Item 22 asked "low socio-economic status of African American students prohibits their recommendation in the gifted program." Item 23 asked "non-standard language of African American students prohibits their identification in the gifted program." Item 24 asked "educational level of African American parents." Item 25 asked "race causes students not to be nominated." Item 26 asked "late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the

gifted program." Item 27 asked "Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students." Item 28 asked "Test bias works against African American students. Item 29 asked "Student's unwillingness to participate in the program." The purpose of obtaining information on these eleven items was to discover the participant's perception of the reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs.

Pilot Study

The survey was pilot tested by eight participants, which include gifted teachers, coordinators, and consultants who have ten or more years experience in gifted education. They were sent the survey and interview questions by e-mail as an attachment. Their revisions and comments were incorporated into the final survey to establish content validity and to improve the questions. Finally, the survey and interview questions were reviewed one by one to determine if all of the comments and revisions have been completed.

Data Collection

The primary methods of data collection were from the Underrepresentation in Gifted Education Questionnaires that was completed by the participants and the Underrepresentation in Gifted Education Interview Questions that were completed by six principals during individual interviews. Contact was made by e-mail and telephone with each principal prior to sending out the questionnaires. The survey was sent through interoffice mail in a pre labeled envelope to all 23 principals who were asked to complete the survey, as well as to two other members or possible members of the school's gifted eligibility team. The principals were provided with three packets which included an

informed consent form, a survey, and a self-addressed envelope addressed to the researcher with mailing instructions. Voluntary consent was obtained from each participant by the principal of each school before they completed the survey. The researcher obtained a signed voluntary consent form from each principal who would be participating in the in-depth interview.

A cover letter accompanied the survey stating the purpose of the study, the importance of their participation, the significance of their responses, and a description of how confidentiality was maintained. Each survey contained a unique number that was assigned to a particular school; this allowed the researcher to track the surveys. The second mail-out was a post card to all participants about four days after the initial survey. The final mail-out was sent to non-respondents three days after the second mail-out. This three-phase administrative process was a modification of Salant and Dillman (1994).

The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, SPSS, which is the most commonly used software for statistical analysis in educational research to analyze the data. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) is the statistical procedure that was used to compare the perceptions of administrators and teachers about the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. Charts and tables were used to present the data. The research questions were answered by items in the survey. The qualitative data was reported using major findings.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of elementary and middle school educators of reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. The overarching question for this study was as follows:

What are educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?
Sub questions answered in this study are as follows:

1. To what extent do principals agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

2. To what extent do teachers agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

3. To what extent do principals and teachers agree on the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

4. What strategies do educational leaders believe are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

The 69 participants for this study consisted of principals and teachers from 3 elementary schools and 20 middle schools located in a large urban school system. All participants were members or possible members of their school's gifted eligibility team. The three elementary school and three middle school principals were selected to participate in the in-depth interviews because their schools had an active gifted eligibility team. After interviewing each principal, the data was compiled, organized, and analyzed, along with a description of each principal's school.

CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study was designed to determine educators' perceptions of reasons for and

strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education

programs in three selected Georgia elementary and twenty middle schools. Three

Georgia elementary school principals and three middle school principals were

interviewed to gain in-depth information about their perceptions of reasons for the

underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs and strategies

they employed to correct it. A survey was completed by 25 middle school teachers, 3

elementary principals, and 3 middle school principals to determine their perceptions of

reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

The principals for the in-depth interviews were chosen based on the operation of their

gifted eligibility teams, and the teachers were chosen based on their ability to serve on the

gifted eligibility team based on their school district's requirements.

The mixed method, both qualitative and quantitative, used in this study was an in-

depth interview with six principals, which was qualitative, and a survey completed by the

gifted eligibility teams, that was quantitative. The interviews were conducted in March

2008 either in person or by telephone. The surveys were sent to the participants at their

respective schools and returned to the researcher through interoffice mail during the

month of March 2008. Each participant read and signed an Informed Consent Form (see

Appendix B, Appendix C, and Appendix D) before the interview was conducted or

before the survey was completed. The researcher carefully explained to the principals

that his or her identity and the school system would remain anonymous; the interview would be recorded if they agreed, and, in order to better understand some information, there would be follow-up questions. The interview protocol (Appendix E) used to guide the interviews discussed the following areas: (1) gifted services and program (2) identification of gifted minorities (3) reasons for underrepresentation (4) strategies they employ and (5) school climate. The survey (Appendix F) was used to obtain quantitative data from participants in the areas of demographics, perceptions of gifted services, and reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

The presentation of data in this study is based on the overarching research question along with the four sub-questions stated in chapter one. The overarching research question examined educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. The overarching question was supported by the following four sub questions:

1. To what extent do principals agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

2. To what extent do teachers agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

3. To what extent do principals and teachers agree on the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

4. What strategies do educational leaders believe are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Research Design

This mixed method research design was incorporated to gain in-depth knowledge of the principal's perceptions of the reasons for and the strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs in selected Georgia elementary and middle schools using the qualitative method. To gain an overview of the principals' and teachers' perceptions of the reasons for the underrepresenation of African Americans in gifted education programs in selected Georgia elementary and middle schools, a questionnaire was used. This mixed method research design gave principals an opportunity to share their in-depth knowledge about the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs and the strategies they employ to correct it using the qualitative interview guide (Appendix E). Then the principals and teachers were able to indicate their perceptions using the survey (Appendix F) about the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. This chapter is partitioned into five sections. The first section is a description of the schools, the second section is the demographics of each principal, the third section outlines the themes and patterns of the principals' reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs, the fourth section discusses the principals' and teachers' reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs, and the fifth section summarizes the findings.

Sunshine Middle School Description

Sunshine Middle School is located in the southern part of a large metropolitan county near apartment complexes, subdivisions, and an industrial park. Currently,

Sunshine Middle School has a population of about 1500 students, which consists of an African American population just over 96%, a Hispanic population of about 1%, and a Multi-Racial population of approximately 1%. Sunshine Middle School is a Title I school under the leadership of a 20 year veteran African American female principal. About 79% of the school's students are considered economically disadvantaged. The gifted population of Sunshine Middle School was just over 8%, while the population of students with disabilities was just over 9%. In 2007, Sunshine Middle School did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress. Approximately 10% of the school's population participates in the magnet program.

<div align="center">Moonlight Middle School Description</div>

Moonlight Middle School is located in the northern part of a large metropolitan county near subdivisions, apartment complexes, condominiums, restaurants, and a mall. Presently, Moonlight Middle School has a population of about 1100 students, which consists of an African American population just over 27%, a Hispanic population over 20%, a White population greater than 43%, an Asian population of about 6%, and a Multi-Racial population over 3%. Moonlight Middle School is a charter school that is not a Title I school, and it is under the leadership of a White male, 19 year veteran principal. About 37% of its students are considered economically disadvantaged. The gifted population of Moonlight Middle School was just over 29%, while the population of students with disabilities was just over 13%. In 2007, Moonlight Middle School did meet Adequate Yearly Progress. This school is known for the many languages that are offered as exploratory classes, along with a strong band and orchestra program.

Twilight Middle School Description

Twilight Middle School is located in the southeastern part of a large metropolitan county near a number of subdivisions in a suburban area. Currently, Twilight Middle School has a population of about 1600 students, which consists of an African American population just over 95%, a Hispanic population just under 1%, and a Multi-Racial population of around 3%. Twilight Middle School, not a Title I school, is under the leadership of an African American male with 17 years of experience. About 60% of its students are considered economically disadvantaged. The gifted population of Twilight Middle School is about 4%, while the population of students with disabilities is about 10%. In 2007, Twilight Middle School did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress. The school is known for its large orchestra and band which have been invited to perform in a number of events across Georgia.

Participants' Profiles of Middle School Principals

Table 1 depicts the personal profile of the participants from the middle schools. Three middle school principals were selected to participate in the study. Their educational levels were masters of education, educational specialists, and doctorate of philosophy. The principal with the doctoral degree is also gifted certified. Their years of experience range from 17 years to 20 years. The ethnicity and gender of the three principals are White male, African American female, and African American male.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Middle School Principals (Interviews)

Principals	Educational Level	Years of Experience	Gender	Ethnicity
MP-A	Masters of Education	19	Male	Anglo American/White
MP-B	Doctor of Philosophy	20	Female	African American/Black
MP-C	Education Specialist	17	Male	African American/Black

MP=Middle School Principal

Daisy Elementary School Description

Daisy Elementary School is a community school located in the southeast part of a large metropolitan county near a quiet neighborhood. Currently, Daisy Elementary School has a population of about 600 students which consists of an African American population just over 97% and a Multi-Racial population of about 3%. Daisy Elementary School is a Title I school under the leadership of a Black female principal. About 79% of its students are considered economically disadvantaged. The gifted population of Daisy Elementary School was just over 6%, while the population of students with disabilities was just over 10%. In 2007 Daisy Elementary School did met Adequate Yearly Progress and is a Distinguished Title I school.

Lily Elementary School Description

Lily Elementary School is located in the northern part of a large metropolitan county near residential neighborhoods, condominiums, and restaurants. Presently, Lily Elementary School has a population of over 500 students, which consists of an Asian /Pacific Islander population of just over 9%, an African American population just under 35%, a White population greater than 34%, and a Multi-Racial population of over 9%.

Lily Elementary School is a charter school under the direction of a White female with over 20 years experiences. It is not a Title I school. About 30% of its students are considered economically disadvantaged. The gifted population of Lily Elementary School is just over 20%, while the population of students with disabilities is just over 8%. In 2007 Lily Elementary School did meet Adequate Yearly Progress. This school is known for its active PTA and enhanced technological additions.

<div align="center">Rose Elementary School Description</div>

Rose Elementary School is located in the central part of a large metropolitan county near residential neighborhoods, condominiums, and restaurants. Presently, Rose Elementary School has a population of over 500 students, which consists of an Asian /Pacific Islander population of just over 16%, an African American population just under 18%, a White population greater than 59%, a Multi-Racial population over 6%, and an English Language Learner population of just fewer than 9%. Rose Elementary School, under the direction of an African American male with over 12 years experience, is not a Title I school. About 9% of its students are considered economically disadvantaged. The gifted population of Rose Elementary School is just over 25%, while the population of students with disabilities is just over 16%. In 2007, Rose Elementary School did meet Adequate Yearly Progress. This school is known for the many languages that are offered as exploratory classes, along with technology literacy, art, and music.

<div align="center">Participants' Profiles of Elementary School Principals</div>

Table 2 depicts the personal profile of the participants from the elementary schools. Three elementary school principals were selected to participate in the study. Their educational levels were two with master's degrees and one educational specialist

degree. Their years of experience range from 12 to 20 years. The ethnicity and gender of the three principals are African American female, White female, and African American male.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Elementary Principals (Interviews)

Principals	Educational Level	Years of Experience	Gender	Ethnicity
EP-A	Master of Education	20	Female	African American/Black
EP-B	Educational Doctorate	20	Female	Anglo American/White
EP-C	Master of Education	12	Male	African American/Black

EP=Elementary Principal

Qualitative Data Analysis

Six principals were selected to participate in this study of three Georgia middle schools and three Georgia elementary schools. The participants were contacted by e-mail and telephone to confirm their participation in the study. All principals agreed to participate after the researcher gained approval from Georgia Southern University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A). Prior to interviewing the principals, the researcher e-mailed and mailed the informed consent form and the interview questions to them.

The analysis of the qualitative research data obtained from the interviews with the elementary and middle school principals is presented to correspond with the research questions. Similarities and patterns from participants' experiences, along with a narrative of recurring themes resulting from the analysis of data, were used to subdivide the data

into topics. Responses were edited to maintain those responses that addressed the interview questions. Sunshine, Moonlight, and Twilight Middle Schools are the pseudonyms used to code the middle schools. Daisy, Lily, and Rose Elementary Schools are pseudonyms used to code the elementary schools.

Gifted Services and Program

Research Sub Question 1. To what extent do principals agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

In the following text selections, the interviewees discussed the need for gifted services and the need for the gifted program. The responses revealed many similarities in the thinking of principals in both elementary and middle school. Although there was a variety of responses, they all reflected the principals' belief in the need for gifted services and the reasons they believe that African Americans are underrepresented in gifted education programs. The following are passages that were extracted from the principals' interviews. Principals listed the following points of view as to their perceptions about the gifted program.

There is a need for gifted services simply because of the students' different learning styles. There is also a need to explore the creativity and critical thinking of the gifted child, which is difficult to do in the regular classroom because of the large number of students. Gifted students are in the minority and therefore their needs are usually not met in the regular classroom setting. Services are needed to help gifted students reach their greatest learning potential.

Many of the principals believe that gifted students need to be taught at a higher level which is not attained in the regular classroom. The classroom teacher usually

teaches to the average students' learning abilities, and the upper level students or gifted students will learn at the rate of the class, rather than pushing to their full potential. It is not practical, nor does it help the gifted learner, to have all students in the same classes because the needs of the gifted learner would not be addressed as needed. The need for gifted services should be justified in the same way that the need is justified for special education services.

One principal said, "I believe that some students function at a higher level and learn in a different way. The gifted program offers the differentiation necessary to address their needs" (Principal, Twilight Middle School).

Identification of Gifted Minorities

The responses of many of the principals were that the state already has guidelines in place by the Georgia Department of Education that must be followed during the identification process.

The identification process requires that students meet three of the four criteria required by the state. Students test into the program based on standardized tests which are reviewed specifically in the first, third, fifth, and seventh grades. However, a number of the principals, both elementary and middle, believes that it is not good enough to just analyze standardized tests. It is the job of each school's gifted eligibility team, which consists of an administrator, gifted teachers, and other certified staff members, to identify gifted students in their schools. Although many of the principals stated that they do have gifted eligibility teams, they admitted that they are not as active as they should be in the identification process.

One elementary principal had this to say, "When we identify the high achievers based on the results of the Criterion Reference and Competency Test (CRCT) scores, this helps to identify any minority students, especially African Americans who would not normally be identified. We also look for students whose scores may be five or less points below the needed high achiever scores. Also, placing these high achievers in classes with the gifted students helps to elevate and fertilize the high achievers' creativity and critical thinking skills; this helps them to achieve the scores needed to be classified as gifted during the next review period for gifted students" (Principal, Daisy Elementary School).

A middle school principal stated, "The problem with the identification process is that the initial placement is based strictly on test scores if a child is in grades 3, 5, or 7. If a child is not academically strong by grade 3, then he is faced with challenges" (Principal, Moonlight Middle School).

Another middle school principal said, "I specifically follow the guidelines when identifying students. Also, because my school's population is all African American, I don't do anything special to identify African American students."

Although Georgia's multiple criteria identification process is a good tool to start the identification process, many of our principals believe that something else is needed to help identify African American students. The middle school principals stated that they do very little identification of gifted students because the elementary schools have done most of the placement of their students by the time they get to the middle schools.

Reasons for Underrepresentation

In the text selection, the greatest degree of consensus among both elementary and middle school principals is that socio-economic status is the major contributor to the

underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs. Many of the African American students do not have access to the needed resources, such as computers, public libraries, and reading materials, outside of school or they cannot get to them. Further, principals also believe that culture, race, and language barriers are also responsible to some extent, due to the diversity of the students and teachers. Many of the teachers may not understand students from different cultures, which could create a cultural deficit and result in the underrepresentation of African American students. Students may also speak substandard English and be unable to understand the tests which are a major form of identification in third, fifth, and seventh grades.   Parents are also considered to be a reason for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs, because many of them do not know or understand the gifted program, and they do not know how to support their children once they are in the program.

One principal stated, "Most of the parents at my school believe that their children are gifted, and I have to constantly defend the school's position about why their students were not placed in the gifted program. Being a former middle school female principal in an elementary school causes me to be challenged daily by the parents, which I believe is due to a level change. However, using the testing data makes it very easy for me to show parents why their children did not qualify for the gifted program, but it is also the major reason why African American children do not qualify for the gifted program" (Principal, Lily Elementary School).

A second principal said, "Most standardized tests are culturally biased. Maybe we need to get away from using standardized tests" (Principal, Twilight Middle School).

A third principal stated, "I believe that the biggest problem is knowledge. Parents may not know about the programs that help develop their children's gifts. They only know about the traditional testing, but they do not know about the program that Georgia State University has to work with students on Saturdays to help develop their gifts" (Principal, Sunshine Middle School).

Finally, this principal explained, "I believe that socio-economic status has the greatest impact due to lack of available resources, which lends itself to have overlaps with other areas, such as race and culture. I don't think that any parents want their child to fail. I just don't believe that they understand the roles they play and the impact those roles have on their children. Schools have changed since they were in school. Maybe education is not valued, but I believe that parents don't realize their roles. Asians enroll their students in school on Saturdays, and they don't accept failure. I guess you could say that culture plays a role in the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs" (Principal, Moonlight Middle School).

Strategies they Employ

> *Research Sub Question 4. What strategies do educational leaders believe are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?*

It was revealed through the qualitative part of this mixed method research design that both middle and elementary school principals are in agreement about some strategies they employ.

All of the principals except Moonlight Middle School's principal agreed that they would change the identification process to include something more than just the

standardized tests. The identification process should be enhanced to include other areas of students' giftedness, such as fine arts, music, portfolios, grade point averages, and perhaps more emphasis on teacher recommendations. The principal of Sunshine Middle School indicated that she would expand the entry threshold. However, Moonlight Middle School's principal stated, "I like the fact that testing either gets you in or it gets you out of the gifted program. I have gifted students of all races including special education in the gifted program. One third of my students are gifted, and the 2007 breakdown was 168 girls and 161 males. The 2007 gifted student population included 263 Whites, 6 Multi-racials, 8 Hispanics, 37 Blacks, 15 Asians, 19 Emotionally Disturbed (ED), 5 Special Educations, and 1 Limited English Proficiency (LEP)."

Sunshine Middle School's principal shared that she would give teachers' recommendations more weight along with looking at a student's grade point average. It is stressed to the teachers that the students must be taught the art of test taking regularly in the classroom so that they may be able to succeed on the standardized tests. We hold information and education sessions for both parents and students.

The principal at Twilight Middle School said that his strategy is to review students' previous years test data and to inform the parents and the students of their past and present performances during a student, parent, and teacher test conference led by the student. He also said that we must also make sure that both teachers and students understand the importance of students doing their best on tests at all times, especially the ones that are used in the gifted identification process.

The elementary school principals were willing to share the following strategies: (1) All staff members are encouraged to have high expectations for all students in the

classroom and on tests. (2) Identify high achievers, who are usually five or less points below the gifted and high achievers' scores, and place them in a class with the gifted students when we have the space. This allows these students to work right along with the gifted students and proves to them that they can do the work. These students usually score high achiever or gifted the next time that they take the test to be identified as eligible for the gifted program. (3) Teach students test taking strategies and critical thinking skills regularly so that they will be prepared to take standardized tests. (4) Encourage teachers to get trained and certified in gifted education, so that they will look beyond the normal standards and realize that giftedness occurs in all cultures, races, and socio-economic strata. (5) The principal at Rose Elementary requires all teachers he hires to be gifted certified, or he gives them one year to earn their gifted certification.

All principals indicated that they follow the identification process required by the state of Georgia and implement anything else that is within the guidelines of their school district and the state. Teachers are also encouraged to attend staff development programs on diversity and multicultural training.

School Climate

A positive school climate is another area that all of the principals agreed needed to be addressed in order to help with the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education.

The principals agreed that it is necessary to help teachers and students understand the importance of students achieving at their maximum potential; many students who have been identified as gifted or as a high achiever, views this honor as a negative factor. A positive school climate would help with the identification of African American

students in gifted education because elementary and middle school students would have a

positive feeling about being in the gifted program, and teachers would be encouraged to

look at the whole child during the identification process. It is important for teachers and

students to understand that the more students in the school that are identified, the better it

is for the school.

A total of 69 surveys was distributed to 20 middle schools and 3 elementary

schools.   Three surveys were sent to each of the principals in interoffice mail, and they

were responsible for distributing them to the members of the gifted eligibility team.

Thirty-one surveys were returned to the researcher in interoffice mail, a 44.9% return

rate.

<div align="center">Results</div>

Item 1: Gender

The participants were asked to respond to the gender question as either male or

female. Twenty-seven females and four males returned their completed questionnaires

and the results are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Gender of Participants

Gender	Number of Participants	Percent
Female	27	87.1
Male	4	12.9
Total	31	100.0

The participants were asked to respond to the ethnicity question which listed African American/Black, Asian, Hispanic, Anglo American/White, or other. Results are summarized in Table 4. Responses were also required of the school level, of which three were elementary principals, 25 were middle school teachers and three principals. Item 4 asked respondents to identify their position at the school which was a choice of principal, assistant principal, teacher, counselor, or other, which is listed in Table 5.

Table 4: Ethnicity of Participants

Ethnicity	Number of Participants	Percent
African American/Black	27	87.1
Asian	1	3.2
Hispanic	0	0.0
Anglo American/White	2	6.5
Other*	1	3.2
Total	31	100.0

*Includes items left blank

Table 5: Position of Participants

Position	Number of Participants	Percent
Principal	6	19.4
Assistant Principal	0	0.0
Teacher	25	80.6
Counselor	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
Total	31	100.0

The number of years that a participant has worked in the field of education was Item 5, and the subject that the participant taught was Item 6. These participant responses are summarized in Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 6: Years Experience in Education

Years of Experience	Number of Participants	Percents
1 – 3	0	0.0
4 – 6	3	9.7
7 – 10	5	16.1
11 - 15	11	35.5
16 – 20	8	25.8
21 or more	3	9.7
Other*	1	3.2
Total	31	100.0

*Includes items left blank

Table 7: Subject Taught

Subject	Number of Participants	Percent
English/LA	10	32.3
Mathematics	11	35.5
Science	0	0.0
Social Studies	0	0.0
Other*	10	32.3
Total	31	100.0

*Includes items left blank

Information about the participants' involvement and knowledge of their school's gifted program is the question in Items 7 thru 11. Twenty-eight of the participants indicated that their school had a gifted program, but only eight of them said that they were gifted certified, and only eight said that they taught in the gifted program. Only nineteen of the participants, 61.3%, noted that there was a gifted eligibility team at their school. Eight out of the thirty-one participants, 25.8%, responded that they were on their school's gifted eligibility team. A summary of the data is presented in Table 8.

Item 12 asked about the number of people on the participant's school gifted eligibility team. Ten participants did not know how many people were on their school's gifted eligibility team. The results for Item 12 are listed in Table 9.

Table 8: Participants Involved in the Gifted Program

Item	Yes	Percent of Yes	No	Percent of No
Is there a gifted program at your school?	28	90.3	3	9.7
Are you gifted certified?	8	25.8	23	74.2
Do you teach in the gifted program?	8	25.8	23	74.2
Is there a gifted eligibility team at your school?	19	61.3	9	29.0
Are you a member of the gifted eligibility team?	8	25.8	23	74.2

Table 9: Number on Gifted Eligibility Team

Item	Number of Participants	Percent
1	1	3.2
2	9	29.0
3	9	29.0
4	2	6.5
Other*	10	32.3
Total	31	100.0

*Includes items left blank

Approximately 5% of the student population is considered to be gifted; however, some schools have considerably more, while others have much less. The next four tables will illustrate the distribution of data investigating student enrollment. Table 10 summarizes all student enrollment, and Figure 1 illustrates that data graphically in a

histogram. Table 11 summarizes African American student enrollment, Table 12

illustrates the number of gifted students enrolled in the schools, and Table 13 illustrates

the number of African American gifted students enrolled in school.

Table 10: Students Enrolled

Number of Students	Number of Participants	Percent
Less than 500	2	6.5
500 – 700	9	29.0
701 – 900	8	25.8
901-1000	3	9.7
101-1200	5	16.1
More than 1200	4	12.9
Total	31	100.0
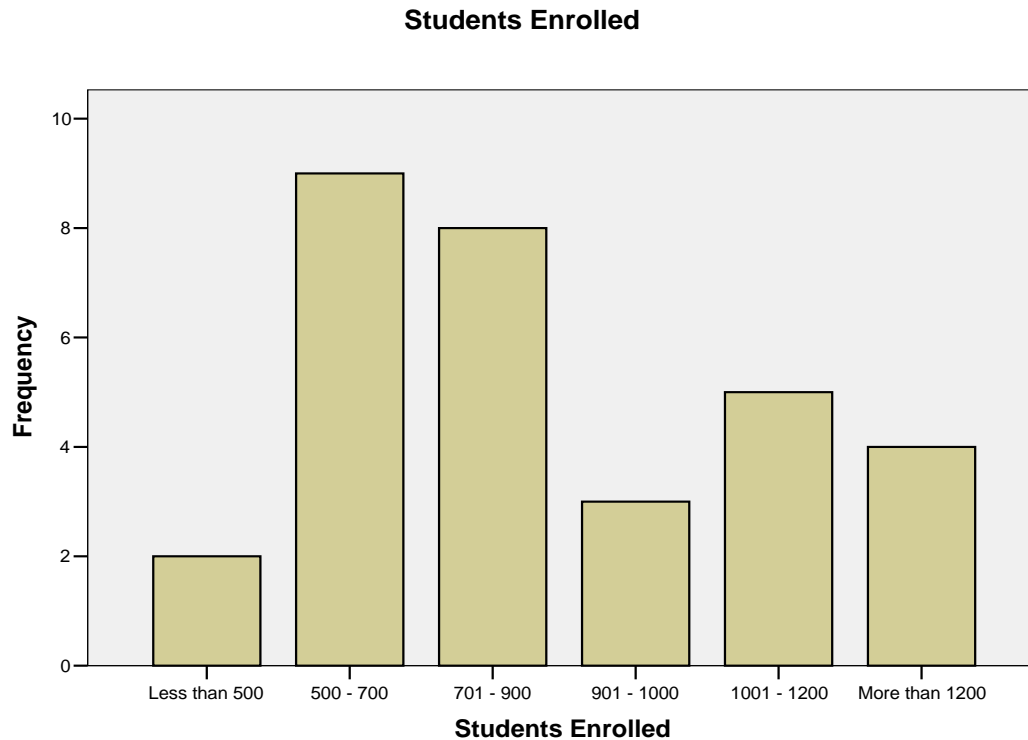
Students Enrolled

Figure 1: Students Enrolled

Table 11: African American Students Enrolled

Number of Students	Number of Participants	Percent
Less than 100	3	9.7
100 – 300	6	19.4
301 – 500	3	9.7
501 – 700	5	16.1
701 – 900	2	6.5
More than 900	12	38.7
Total	31	100.0

Table 12: Gifted Students Enrolled

Number of Students	Number of Participants	Percent
Less than 25	3	9.7
25 – 50	4	12.9
51 – 100	11	35.5
101 – 150	5	16.1
151 – 200	3	9.7
More than 200	3	9.7
Other*	2	6.5
Total	31	100.0

*Includes items left blank

Table 13: African American Gifted Students Enrolled

Number of Students	Number of Participants	Percent
Less than 14	1	3.2
5 – 14	3	9.7
15 – 24	3	9.7
25 – 34	9	29.0
35 – 45	3	9.7
More than 45	9	29.0
Other*	3	9.7
Total	31	100.0

*Includes items left blank

Item 17 asked whether or not the participants believe that gifted students need special services. All 31 of the participants, 100%, said "yes, gifted students need special services." Principals agreed, teachers agreed, and both principals and teachers agreed that they need the gifted services.

Item 18 asked participants if they believed that African American students are underrepresented in the gifted education program at their particular school. About 64.5% of the respondents said that they did believe African American students are underrepresented in their school, even though their school was majority African American. However, 29% of the participants said that they did not believe that African American students are underrepresented in their gifted program.

Table 14: Participants' Beliefs about the Need for Special Services for Gifted Students and the Underrepresentation of African American Students in the Gifted Education Program at their School

Item	Yes	Percent of Yes	No	Percent of No	Other*	Percent of Other
Do you believe that gifted students need special services?	31	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Do you believe that African American students are underrepresented in the gifted program at your school?	20	64.5	9	29.0	2	6.5

*Includes items left blank

In Table 15 the analysis, Cronbach's Alpha, a reliability statistic, was used to provide information about the internal consistency of a number of items. After the

researcher ran Cronbach's Alpha for Items 19 thru 29, reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs, the results were that the overall alpha was .828. This is a high alpha and indicates strong internal consistency among the 11 reasons for underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education; the results are summarized in Table 16. If the corrected item total correlation of any item is less than .30, that would indicate a low correlation for item-analysis purposes. To create an overall composite score, the "Definition of Giftedness inhibits identification of minority students" would be removed because r = .216, which indicates that it is not internally consistent with the other items. The scale statistics in Table 17 indicate a mean of 24.03, variance of 29.166, and a standard deviation of 5.401 for the 11 reasons for underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education.

Table 15: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.828	11

Table 16: Reasons for Underrepresentation of African Americans – Total Statistics

Reasons for Underrepresentation	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Culture, specifically African American, does not value intellectual giftedness	21.68	25.292	.352	.828
Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students	21.74	27.131	.216	.835
Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic	22.00	23.533	.648	.801
Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their recommendation to the gifted program	22.00	25.067	.435	.820
Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification into the gifted program	22.00	24.733	.560	.810
The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program	21.71	24.546	.509	.813
Race causes African American students not to be nominated	21.65	23.903	.630	.803
Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program	21.94	24.662	.577	.808
Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students	21.94	21.996	.648	.799
Test bias works against African American students	22.23	24.514	.450	.819
Student unwillingness to participate in the gifted program is problematic	21.45	24.323	.493	.815

Table 17: Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
24.03	29.166	5.401	11

Table 18 uses a four-category scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree) indicating principals' perceptions about the reasons for the underrepresentation of African American Students in gifted education programs. The results in the table indicate that more than 50% of the principals agreed on the following: (1) African American culture does not value intellectual giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3) Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (5) Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (6) The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program; (7) Race causes African American students not to be nominated; (8) Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program; (9) Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students; (10) Test bias works against African American students. These are all reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.   However, 66.7% of the principals disagreed that (11) "Student unwillingness to participate in the program is problematic" was a reason for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs.

Table 19 used the same four-category scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree) revealing teachers' perceptions about the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. The teachers had over 50% agreement that 1) African American culture does not value intellectual giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3) Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (5) Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (6) Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program (7) Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students (8) Test bias works against African American students and (9) Student unwillingness to participate in the gifted program is problematic, but they strongly disagreed by 52% that (1) Educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program and (2) Race causes African American students not to be nominated were reasons for the underrepresentation.

Table 20 (Educators' Perceptions) demonstrates the perceptions of both Table 18 (Principals' Perceptions) and Table 19 (Teachers' Perceptions). According to Table 20, more than 50% of the educators agreed that 1) African American culture does not value intellectual giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3) Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (5) Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (6) The educational level of African American

parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program; (7) Race causes African American students not to be nominated; (8) Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program; (9) Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students; (10) Test bias works against African American students; (11) Student unwillingness to participate in the program is problematic are all reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

Table 18: Percent of Principals' Perceptions about the Reasons for the
Underrepresentation of African American Students in Gifted Education Programs

Reasons	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Culture, specifically African American, does not value intellectual giftedness	0.0	66.7	33.3	0.0
Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students	0.0	66.7	33.3	0.0
Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic	33.3	33.3	33.3	0.0
Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their recommendation to the gifted program	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification into the gifted program	16.7	66.7	16.7	0.0
The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program	33.3	50.0	16.7	0.0
Race causes African American students not to be nominated	16.7	50.0	33.3	0.0
Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program	16.7	50.0	33.3	0.0
Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students	16.7	50.0	0.0	33.3
Test bias works against African American students	50.0	33.3	16.7	0.0
Student unwillingness to participate in the gifted program is problematic	0.0	33.3	50.0	16.7

Table 19: Percent of Teachers' Perceptions about the Reasons for the Underrepresentation of African American Students in Gifted Education Programs

Reasons	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Culture, specifically African American, does not value intellectual giftedness	20.0	36.0	32.0	12.0
Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students	12.0	52.0	32.0	4.0
Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic	24.0	52.0	20.0	4.0
Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their recommendation to the gifted program	20.0	48.0	28.0	4.0
Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification into the gifted program	24.0	48.0	28.0	0.0
The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program	12.0	36.0	48.0	4.0
Race causes African American students not to be nominated	12.0	36.0	48.0	4.0
Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program	20.0	52.0	28.0	0.0
Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students	32.0	48.0	8.0	12.0
Test bias works against African American students	40.0	44.0	8.0	8.0
Student unwillingness to participate in the gifted program is problematic	8.0	48.0	28.0	16.0

Table 20: Percent of Educators' Perceptions about the Reasons for the
Underrepresentation of African American Students in Gifted Education Programs

Reasons	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Culture, specifically African American, does not value intellectual giftedness	16.1	41.9	32.3	9.7
Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students	9.7	54.8	32.3	3.2
Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic	25.5	48.4	22.6	3.2
Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their recommendation to the gifted program	25.8	48.4	22.6	3.2
Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification into the gifted program	22.6	51.6	25.8	0.0
The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program	16.1	38.7	41.9	3.2
Race causes African American students not to be nominated	12.9	38.7	45.2	3.2
Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program	19.4	51.6	29.0	0.0
Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students	29.0	48.4	6.5	16.1
Test bias works against African American students	41.9	41.9	9.7	6.5
Student unwillingness to participate in the gifted program is problematic	6.5	45.2	32.3	16.1

Quantitative Data Analysis

Research Sub Question 1. To what extent do principals agree on the reasons for

underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

The principals overwhelming agreed that 10 of the 11 items were reasons for the

underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs, and they

also disagreed that "Student's unwillingness to participate in the program" was not a

reason for the underrpresentation. Principals agreed 66.7% of the time that the following

were reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education

programs: (1) Culture, specifically African Americans, does not value intellectual

giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3)

Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Race

causes African American students not to be nominated; (5) Late identification of African

American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program; and (6) Teachers do not

recognize gifted potential of African American students. They also agreed 83.3% of the

time that the following were reasons for the underrepresentation: (1) Non-standard

language of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted

program; (2) The educational level of African American parents affects student attitudes

about the gifted program; and (3) Test bias works against African American students.

They had 100% agreement that low socio-economic status of African American students

inhibits their recommendation to the gifted program. However, they disagreed 66.7% of

the time that "Student unwillingness to participate in the gifted program is problematic"

was a reason for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted

education programs. Therefore, principals agreed ten out of eleven reasons or 91% on

the reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs.

Research Sub Question 2. To what extent do teachers agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Teachers reached a consensus on the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. They agreed 56% that "Culture, specifically African American, does not value intellectual giftedness;" 64% that "Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students;" 76% that "Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic;" 68% that "Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their recommendation to the gifted program;" 72% that "Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification into the gifted program;" 72% that "Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program;" 80% that "Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students;" 88% that "Test bias works against African American students," and 56% that "Student unwillingness to participate in the gifted program is problematic" were reasons for the underrepresentation. However, 52% disagreed that "The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program" and "Race causes African American students not to be nominated" were reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs. Therefore, the teachers agreed that 9 out of 11 items or 82% were reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs.

Research Sub Question 3. To what extent do principals and teachers agree on the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Educators, principals and teachers, agreed that 11 out of 11 items or 100% were reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs. More than 50% agreed that the following: (1) Culture, specifically African American, does not value intellectual giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3) Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their recommendation to the gifted program; (5) Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification into the gifted program; (6) The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program; (7) Race causes African American students not to be nominated; (8) Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program; (9) Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students; (10) Test bias works against African American students, and (11) Student unwillingness to participate in the gifted program is problematic. They classified these as all reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs.

Research Sub Question 4. What strategies do educational leaders believe are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Principals, the educational leaders, from the three middle schools and the three elementary schools believe that the following strategies are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs:

(1) Change the identification process to include more than standardized tests; (2) Give teacher recommendations more weight and look at students' grade point averages; (3) Review students' previous year test scores with students, parents, and teacher; (4) Encourage all staff members to have high expectations for all students; (5) Identify and work high achievers and students who were five or less points away from qualifying for the gifted and high achiever programs; (6) Teach students test taking strategies and critical thinking skills to prepare them for standardized tests; (7) Encourage teachers to get trained and certified in gifted education; (8) Encourage teachers and staff to attend diversity and multicultural training; and (9) Create a positive school climate that is accepting of gifted students and teachers.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The approval for the researcher to begin collecting data was given by Georgia Southern University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A). The mixed method, consisting of the qualitative method and the quantitative method, was used to gather data. The qualitative research method was used to complete an in-depth study on six selected middle school and elementary school principals. Three of the principals were from middle schools, and three were from elementary schools. A variety of diversity and educational levels were represented in the demographic profile of the study. The principals were selected based on their gifted eligibility teams during this school year. Each principal was interviewed at his or her school. The interviews were coded and transcribed from the researcher's written notes and audio tapes. The participants responded to eight questions during the in-depth interviews. This was the qualitative part of this study that was guided by the questionnaire (Appendix E). The participant's

identity and school's anonymity were maintained by using the following pseudonyms in the study: Sunshine Middle School, Moonlight Middle School, Twilight Middle School, Daisy Elementary School, Lily Elementary School, and Rose Elementary School. There were five common themes and patterns found by the researcher. These common themes or patterns were (1) gifted services and program, (2) identification of gifted minorities, (3) reasons for underrepresentation, (4) strategies employed and (5) school climate.

The quantitative data of this research was collected using a twenty-nine question multiple choice survey (Appendix F). In items 19 through 29, the educators responded on a four-degree scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree about their perceptions of the reasons for the underrepresentaition of African American students in gifted education programs. The surveys were sent to the principals of each middle school through interoffice mail, and the principals forwarded the surveys to the members of the gifted eligibility team. Each participant was given a stamped addressed envelope to return the completed informed consent form to the researcher through U. S. mail in order to maintain the anonymity of the participants. The completed survey was returned to the researcher in interoffice mail. The researcher found the following common reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs: (1) Culture does not value intellectual giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3) Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their recommendation to the gifted program; (5) Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification into the gifted program; (6) The educational level of African American parents affects student attitude toward the gifted

program; (7) Race causes students not to be nominated; (8) Late identification of African

American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program; (9) Teachers do not

recognize gifted potential of African American students; (10) Test bias works against

African American students; and (11) Student willingness to participate in the program is

problematic. These were all seen as reasons for the underrepresentation of African

American students in gifted education programs.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This final chapter is a summary of the study, data analysis, and research findings using the mixed method, which consists of both qualitative and quantitative methods, in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the participants' perceptions. The qualitative data was collected using the "Underrepresentation in Gifted Education Interview Questionnaire." The quantitative data was collected using the "Underrepresentation in Gifted Education Questionnaire," which was a 29 question survey completed by three members of the gifted eligibility teams in 20 Georgia middle schools and three elementary schools. The major sections of this chapter discuss findings, implications, recommendations, and conclusions of this study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of the elementary and middle school educators of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

The researcher proposed to answer the following overarching question in this study:

What are educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?
Sub questions answered in this study were as follows:

1. To what extent do principals agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

2. To what extent do teachers agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

3. To what extent do principals and teachers agree on the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

4. What strategies do educational leaders believe are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

The mixed method paradigm, a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, was used to allow the researcher to have the best of both kinds of research. It was research that combined qualitative and quantitative methods, approaches, techniques, language, or concepts into one study (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Using this mixed method approach, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with three middle school principals and three elementary school principals in his or her individual school. The researcher used interoffice mail to send out 69 surveys, which had 29 questions, to 20 middle schools and three elementary schools. The principals distributed the surveys to members of the school's eligibility team. Thirty-one surveys from 25 teachers and six principals were returned, a 44.9% return rate.

In addition to the surveys, face-to-face interviews with the principals were conducted. These interviews were coded and transcribed from notes and audio tapes using a voice recorder. The participants responded to eight questions during the in-depth interviews. Anonymity was maintained for both the participant and the school. Pseudonyms for the schools were Sunshine Middle School, Moonlight Middle School, Twilight Middle School, Daisy Elementary School, Lily Elementary School, and Rose

Elementary School. As a result of the surveys and interviews, important and useful data was established and helped to explain the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted programs.

<div align="center">Discussion of Research Findings</div>

The purpose of this mixed method study, which was both qualitative and quantitative, was to determine the perceptions of the elementary and middle school educators of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs in six selected middle and elementary schools and twenty selected middle schools in Georgia. The qualitative data allowed for an in-depth view of the principals and their experiences, while the quantitative data presented an opportunity to obtain demographics and gifted eligibility team members' perceptions of reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs in Georgia.

Research Sub Question 1. To what extent do principals agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Discussion

The principals all agreed that there is a need for gifted services; however, all students that are gifted may not have access to those services because of the identification process. They overwhelmingly agreed that the identification process needs to be enhanced in another way to identify gifted African American students, rather than by just examining standardized tests. The middle school principals all agreed that they do very little identification of gifted students. Identification is required in grade 7, although most of the placement is done in the elementary schools during grades 3 and 5. A number of

the elementary principals agreed that they do look at other factors and try to service students in mixed groups -- high achievers and gifted -- if they are only a few points away from the required gifted score. However they all agreed that they follow the State of Georgia's requirements for gifted placement, but, because the program is problematic in the identification process, many African American students are not identified.

All of the principals believed strongly that socio-economic status has a great impact on placement. Economically poor students have fewer opportunities for enhanced learning experiences, such as trips to museums, libraries, and plays. They also have fewer technological resources, such as computers and graphing calculators. Several principals stated that a student's culture is shaped by the parents, who may neither have the knowledge or understanding of gifted programs and what is needed to be successful in today's schools.

All of the principals except one agreed that testing bias is also a reason for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education. Many of them believe standardized tests are culturally biased. The references and language used in the tests are geared to the predominant culture. In addition, African American students often have problems with standardized tests because they are limited in test taking skills and strategies.

Research Sub Question 2. To what extent do teachers agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Discussion

Teachers are the gatekeepers for students trying to enter into the gifted education programs (Ford, 2005). But if they are the gatekeepers, then how well do they know and

understand their students? Today's gifted students consist of a variety of cultures, races, and nationalities. They are an extremely diverse population with many children of color coming from disadvantaged and low socioeconomic status. Do teachers know what giftedness looks like in any culture, ethnicity, or economic status?

The study by Elhoweris, Mutua, Alskeikh, and Holloway (2005) examines the effect of students' ethnicity on teachers' referral and recommendation for placement in gifted and talented programs based on vignettes. The racial composite of the teachers was 83% European American and 92% women. Using the SPSS multivariate analysis of variance system (MANOVA), the results showed a significant effect of student's ethnicity. It showed that African American students were less likely to be referred by their teachers than non-labeled students.

In this study about the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs, 100% of the teachers agreed that gifted students need gifted services. However, 76% of the teachers agreed that African Americans were underrepresented in their school's gifted education program. Therefore, 24% of the teachers disagreed that African American students were underrepresented in their school's gifted education program.

The teachers agreed that 9 out of 11, or 82%, of the items are reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. They agreed more than 50% of the time on the following reasons: (1) African American culture does not value intellectual giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3) Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their

identification for the gifted program; (5) Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (6) Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program; (7) Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students; (8) Test bias works against African American students; (9) Student unwillingness to participate in the program is problematic. Over 50% of teachers disagreed, however, that (1) The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program, and (2) Race causes African American students not to be nominated are not reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs. It is interesting to note 23 of the 25 teachers surveyed, or 92%, were African American/Black, which does affect students' recommendation and placement in gifted education programs.

According to Milner and Ford (2007), it is very important for elementary teachers to identify and recommend minority students to the gifted program early because this increases their chances of being successful and staying in the program. African American students appear to be engaged in learning until they reach the fourth grade.

The majority of the teachers agreed that African American students are underrepresented in the gifted education programs, and, according to research, the teachers make the majority of the recommendations. As student populations become more diverse, teachers must be educated and trained to recognize gifted students of color. Since teachers are the gatekeepers, they need to use the key of identification to help reverse the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs.

Research Sub Question 3. To what extent do principals and teachers agree on the reasons for underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs? Discussion

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* caused several politicians to push for accountability performance-based standards. As a result, school districts are expected to meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) or be classified as a failing school. Principals and teachers are accountable for their students' performance on standardized tests (Moon, Brighton, & Callahan, 2003). According to Sergiovanni (2001, p.25), "A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students." Therefore, principals and teachers are accountable and in agreement on student achievement.

Analysis of the data revealed that the principals and teachers agreed that 11 out of 11 or 100% of the items were reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs.   After running a combined report on SPSS, the principals and teachers agreed more than 50% on each reason for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted programs. However, the principals disagreed that, "Student unwillingness to participate in the program is problematic," was a reason for the underrepresentation. A review of the teachers' report revealed that they disagreed more than 50% that "The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program," and "Race causes African American students not to be nominated" were reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education. However, when data from the principals and from the

teachers are run together, they presented 100% agreement on all items being accepted as reasons for the underrepresentation.

As an instructional leader, the principal is required to promote teacher and student learning. His focus changes from intentions to results and from inputs to outcomes (DuFour, 2002). Ultimately, principals are responsible for all student achievement in their schools.

Research Sub Question 4. What strategies do educational leaders believe are necessary to address the problem of the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

Discussion

According to the in-depth interviews, the elementary and middle school principals or educational leaders believe the following strategies are necessary to address the problem of underrepresentation: (1) The identification process should be evaluated and modified, (2) Weight should be given to the classroom teacher's recommendation, (3) Test scores should be reviewed by the teacher and students, (4) High expectations should be set for all students, (5) Opportunities should be provided for potentially gifted qualified students to interact with gifted students, (6) Students should be taught test taking strategies and critical thinking skills, (7) Teachers should be encouraged to obtain training and certification in gifted education, (8) Teachers and staff should be encouraged to attend diversity and multicultural training, (9) A positive school climate which is accepting of gifted teachers and students must be created.

Overarching Research Question: What are educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

 Discussion

This section addresses the overarching research question: What are educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

The researcher found that the educators, principals and teachers, agreed on two major beliefs: (1) gifted students need special programs and (2) African American students are underrepresentation in gifted education programs. Based on those two beliefs, the educators agreed in the surveys to eleven reasons for the underrepresentation, and, during the interviews the principals derived nine strategies aimed at correcting the underrepresentation. As the leader, it is the principal's responsibility to begin the implementation of the strategies for all stakeholders involved. The six principals in this study were learning principals and, as a result, their entire schools will take on the learning characteristic of the principal (DuFour, 2002).

As these leaders take on the responsibilities of being mentors and leaders who are committed to being a solution to the problem of underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs, only then will the students experience the difference that a leader can make (Grantham, 2004a). Once the teachers and stakeholders take on the commitment characteristic and become a solution to the problem, only then will the tragic and unnecessary waste of human potential and promise stop (Ford, 1996).

Conclusions

In conclusion, there have been a number of researchers who have demonstrated an interest in the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted programs. However, to this date, a satisfactory solution has not been found; the need is still there. Because of the No Child Left Behind Act 2001 (NCLB), schools continue to be under pressure to increase student achievement, often at the expense of gifted education.

Elementary schools review student test data in grades 3 and 5, which results in a larger placement of eligible students in the gifted program. This is in contrast to the middle school which tests in seventh grade, often resulting in a smaller number of students identified and placed. While it is important that all educators be trained in gifted education, it is especially important that elementary school teachers earn the gifted endorsement in order to do the recommendations.

The principals and teachers agreed on the following reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education: (1) African American culture does not value intellectual giftedness; (2) Definition of giftedness inhibits identification of minority students; (3) Identification process for admission into the gifted program is problematic; (4) Low socio-economic status of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (5) Non-standard language of African American students inhibits their identification for the gifted program; (6) The educational level of African American parents negatively affects student attitudes about the gifted program; (7) Race causes African American students not to be nominated; (8) Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program; (9) Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students;

(10) Test bias works against African American students; (11) Student unwillingness to participate in the program is problematic.

Implications

The implications of this study of educators' perceptions of the reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs developed four major themes: gifted services and program, reasons for underrepresentation, strategies educators employ, and school climate. Based on these themes, the principals and other gifted advocates should use these strategies and other activities to assist with recommendation, identification, and testing procedures of African American students. The principals who were interviewed felt strongly about following the state guidelines, but they also understood that elements of the identification and placement process were not fair to African Americans students. Hopefully, the results of this study may help to remedy the problems and may promote changes for the better in the field of gifted education.

Recommendations

Based on the review of the literature and data collected from respondents in this study, the results lead the researcher to suggest the following:

1. Principals, teachers, parents, students, and other advocates for gifted education should review the reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs and should select strategies to correct the underrepresentation.

2. The gifted educators and other stakeholders should examine the definition of gifted and learn the identification process mandated by the state of Georgia.

3. Gifted eligibility teams, as well as gifted teachers from the middle school and its feeder elementary schools, should meet, discuss, and understand the process of identification, recommendation, and testing of gifted students.

4. Continuing research, investigation, and re-evaluation should be done in the hope that alternative methods of identification will benefit the African American population.

Dissemination

It is the researcher's belief that the information found in this study is of value to elementary and middle school principals, teachers, gifted coordinators, students, parents and other citizens who are interested in improving education for all children. School leaders and gifted advocates may find connections to this study as they find ways to increase the representation of African Americans in gifted education programs. This research presents reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education, this will add to the field of knowledge concerning gifted education.

The researcher plans to present and to distribute findings from this study to educators during professional development sessions. A presentation is planned for the 2009 Georgia Association for Gifted Children's Conference (GAGC). She hopes to conduct workshops, study groups, and other informational sessions for educators, students, and parents interested in learning about African Americans in gifted education.

Concluding Thoughts

Diversity is on the rise, and it will only increase as time goes on; therefore, as educators, we must be willing to be life-long learners and to keep the research alive. As long as learning is continuous, we will always have hope of finding a solution. Therefore, the problem of the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs does have a chance to be reversed, but if the researching and learning stops, then so does the hope. Remember when the leading technology was the lead pencil?

Our perceptions and lives are shaped through our environment, culture, and experiences; therefore, we should be accepting of all cultures and willing to learn. I am closing with a thought from an African American woman who was a giant in gifted education, Dr. Mary M. Frasier. During an interview, Dr. Frasier described attitudes that create barriers for students underrepresented in gifted programs (Grantham, 2002):

> Things like poor kids and gifted programs just don't go together. I mean, I think that people in their heart of hearts really think that when kids are poor they can't possibly perform at the level of kids that are advantaged because they haven't had certain kinds of advantages in their home. There is such a cause-effect relationship in gifted programs that create barriers, you know, I call them my list of prerequisites to being gifted. You must have two parents; they must be college educated. You must be White. You must be in the suburbs. I know this sounds a little bit facetious, but if you look at the enrollment in gifted programs, it's not facetious. And any time you have those factors missing, then it is very difficult for people to grasp the whole issue of giftedness in other groups. (p. 50)

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL LETTER

<div style="border: 1px solid black;">

Georgia Southern University
Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Phone: 912-681-0843

Fax: 912-681-0719   IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu

Veazey Hall 2021
P.O. Box 8005
Statesboro, GA 30460

</div>

To: Deborah A. Dunn
P.O. Box 1272
Stone Mountain, GA 30086

Linda M. Arthur
P.O. Box 8131

CC: Charles E. Patterson
Associate Vice President for Research

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: March 10, 2008

Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

---

After a review of your proposed research project numbered: H08177 and titled "Educators' Perceptions of Reasons for and Strategies to Correct the Underrepresentation of African Americans in Gifted Education Programs", it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.

This IRB approval is in effect for one year from the date of this letter. If at the end of that time, there have been no changes to the research protocol; you may request an extension of the approval period for an additional year. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, whether or not it is believed to be related to the study, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator prior to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer

APPENDIX B

PRINCIPAL'S INFORMED CONSENT

Principal Informed Consent

Title: Educators' Perceptions of Reasons for and Strategies to
                                    Correct the Underrepresentation of African Americans in
                                    Gifted Education Programs

Principal Investigator: Deborah A. Dunn

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Linda Arthur, Department of Leadership, Technology, and
                                    Human Development at Georgia Southern University

I.   Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to
determine educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the
underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. You are invited
to participate because you are an elementary or middle school administrator. A total of
105 participants from 84 elementary and 21 middle schools within this large urban school
district will be recruited for this study. Participation will require 20 minutes of your time
to complete the enclosed questionnaire.

II.   Procedures:

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete the demographic
information and questionnaire related to your perceptions of reasons for the
underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs on the
scantron form provided. After completion of the questionnaire, you are to return the
questionnaire and scantron form to the researcher through interoffice courier or U. S.
mail with the self addressed envelope that is provided for you. You may sign your
informed consent and send it through interoffice courier at a later date so that you
will not be identified with a particular questionnaire. Returning your signed
informed consent only signifies that you completed a questionnaire.

III.   Risks:

In this study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of
life.

IV.   Benefits:

Participation in this study may benefit you personally by identifying the perceptions of
elementary and middle school administrators of reasons for underrepresentation of African
Americans in gifted education programs and the strategies they employ.

V.   Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in this research is voluntary. You do not have to be a part of this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VI.   Confidentiality:

The researcher will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. To ensure confidentiality, personal information (e.g. district name, school name and principal name) is not applicable. The information you provide for this research is confidential and all raw data will be kept in a secured file by the researcher. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when the researcher presents this study or publishes its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally.

VII.   Contact Persons:

If you have questions or concerns, you may contact me at 770-498-8072 or by e-mail statmath76@aol.com. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or the process of IRB approval, you may contact the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-681-0843.

VIII.   Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

The researcher will give the participant a copy of this consent form to keep.
If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

_____   _____
Participant   Date

_____   _____
Principal Investigator   Date

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEWEE'S INFORMED CONSENT

Interviewee's Informed Consent

Title:	Educators' Perceptions of Reasons for and Strategies to Correct the Underrepresentation of African Americans in Gifted Education Programs
Principal Investigator:	Deborah A. Dunn
Faculty Advisor:	Dr. Linda Arthur, Department of Leadership, Technology, and Human Development at Georgia Southern University

I.   Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to determine educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. You are invited to participate because you are an elementary or middle school administrator, teacher, or staff member. A total of 6 interviewees will be recruited for this study. Participation will require 60 minutes of your time.

II.   Procedures:

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview session to answer questions related to your perceptions of reasons for the underrpresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs due to (1) need for services, (2) serving gifted students in schools, (3) identifying gifted African American students, (4) barriers that contribute, (5) students chosen for gifted program despite identification process, (6) identification process to include all races, (7) contribution of testing and (8) school climate that is accepting of gifted students. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. Your comments will be recorded on audiotape to accurately document your responses for this research.

III.   Risks:

In this study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life.

IV.   Benefits:

Participation in this study may benefit you personally by identifying if there is a pattern among leadership behaviors of elementary principals that are used in successful elementary schools.

V.   Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be a part of this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VI.   Confidentiality:

The researcher will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. The researcher will use pseudonyms to protect the identity of each principal and their school. The information you provide for this research is confidential and all raw data will be kept in a secured file by the researcher. The researcher will be the only person who will have access to the information you provide. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when the researcher presents this study or publishes its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally. After the interview has been completed, the audio tapes will be stored for five years, March 2008-March 2013. All audio tapes from the completion of the study will be destroyed after five years.

VII.   Contact Persons:

If you have questions or concerns, you may contact me at 770-498-8072 or by e-mail statmath76@aol.com. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or the process of IRB approval, you may contact the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-681-0843.

VIII.   Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

The researcher will give the participant a copy of this consent form to keep.
If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

_____   _____
Participant   Date

_____   _____
Principal Investigator   Date

APPENDIX D

TEACHER/STAFF MEMBER'S INFORMED CONSENT

Teacher/Staff Member's Informed Consent

Title: Educators' Perceptions of Reasons for and Strategies to
                                    Correct the Underrepresentation of African Americans in
                                    Gifted Education Programs

Principal Investigator: Deborah A. Dunn

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Linda Arthur, Department of Leadership, Technology, and
                                    Human Development at Georgia Southern University

I.   Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to
determine educators' perceptions of reasons for and strategies to correct the
underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs. You are invited
to participate because you are an elementary or middle school teacher or staff member. A
total of 210 participants from 84 elementary and 21 middle schools within this large
urban school district will be recruited for this study. Participation will require 20 minutes
of your time to complete the enclosed questionnaire.

II.   Procedures:

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete the demographic
information and questionnaire related to your perceptions of reasons for the
underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs on the
scantron form provided. After completion of the questionnaire, you are to return the
questionnaire and scantron form to the researcher through interoffice courier or U. S.
mail with the self addressed envelope that is provided for you. You may sign your
informed consent and send it through interoffice courier at a later date so that you
will not be identified with a particular questionnaire. Returning your signed
informed consent only signifies that you completed a questionnaire.

III.   Risks:

In this study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of
life.

IV.   Benefits:

Participation in this study may benefit you personally by identifying if there is a pattern
among leadership behaviors of elementary principals that are used in successful
elementary schools.

V.   Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be a part of this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VI.   Confidentiality:

The researcher will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. To ensure confidentiality, personal information (e.g. district name, school name and principal name) is not applicable. The information you provide for this research is confidential and all raw data will be kept in a secured file by the researcher. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when the researcher presents this study or publishes its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally.

VII.   Contact Persons:

If you have questions or concerns, you may contact me at 770-498-8072 or by e-mail statmath76@aol.com. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or the process of IRB approval, you may contact the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-681-0843.

VIII.   Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

The researcher will give the participant a copy of this consent form to keep.
If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

_____   _____
Participant   Date

_____   _____
Principal Investigator   Date

APPENDIX E

UNDERREPRESENTATION IN GIFTED EDUCATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Underrepresentation in Gifted Education Interview Questions

1. Some people believe that "no services" are needed for gifted students. How would you justify the need for gifted services, if at all?

2. What is the best way to serve gifted students at your school? In other words, how would you set up a gifted program, if you were not limited by state or local rules? How would you set up a gifted program to work with the students at your school?

3. Would the way you set up the gifted program help in identifying minority students, African American students in particular?

4. If culture, language barriers, race, and socio-economic status contribute to the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs, what can schools do about this?

5. Can you give me one example of a student who was selected for the gifted program despite the identification process and how was that student chosen?

6. In what ways could we change the identification process to include gifted students of all races?

7. How does testing contribute to the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education programs?

8. How would you create a school climate in which teachers and students are accepting of gifted students?

APPENDIX F

UNDERREPRESENTATION IN GIFTED EDUCATION SURVEY

Underrepresentation in Gifted Education Questionnaire

The underrepresentation of minorities, specifically African Americans, in gifted education has been researched by gifted educators for more than twenty years and it continues to be a concern. This questionnaire is part of a research study designed to assess reasons for the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted programs based on the perceptions of principals and teachers in elementary and middle schools. Your participation in completing and returning this questionnaire will greatly assist in this research. Please return to

Deborah Dunn
P. O. Box 1272
Stone Mountain, GA 30086-1272

Circle your answer.

1. What is your gender?   1. Female   2. Male

2. What is your ethnicity?   1. African American/Black   2. Asian   3. Hispanic
                                              4. Anglo American/White   5. Other _____

3. What is your school level?   1. Elementary   2. Middle

4. What is your position at your school? 1. Principal   2. Assistant Principal   3. Teacher
                                              4. Counselor   5. Other _____

5. How many years have you worked in the field of education?

        1. 1 – 3 years   2. 4 – 6 years   3. 7 – 10 years
        4. 11 – 15 years   5. 16 – 20 years   6. 21 or more years

6. What subject do you teach?   1. English/LA   2. Mathematics   3. Science
                                              4. Social Studies   5. Other _____

7. Is there a gifted program at your school?   1. Yes   2. No

8. Are you gifted certified?   1. Yes   2. No

9. Do you teach in the gifted program?   1. Yes   2. No

10. Is there a gifted eligibility team at your school?   1. Yes   2. No

11. Are you a member of the gifted eligibility team at your school? 1. Yes   2. No

12. How many people are on the gifted eligibility team?   1. 1   2. 2   3. 3   4. 4

13. How many students are enrolled in your school?

        1. Less than 500   2. 500 – 700   3. 701 – 900
        4. 901 - 1000   5. 1001 – 1200   6. More than 1200

14. How many African American students are enrolled in your school?

    1. Less than 100   2. 100 – 300   3. 301 – 500
    4. 501 – 700   5. 701 – 900   6. More than 900

15. How many students are enrolled in the gifted program at your school?

    1. Less than 25   2. 25 – 50   3. 51 – 100
    4. 101 – 150   5. 151 – 200   6. More than 200

16. How many African American students are enrolled in your school's gifted program?

    1. Less than 5   2. 5 – 14   3. 15 – 24
    4. 25 – 34   5. 35 – 45   6. More than 45

17. Do you believe that gifted students need special services?   1. Yes   2. No

18. Do you believe that African American students are underrepresented in the gifted program at your school?   1. Yes   2. No

Please indicate your response concerning your perceptions about the reasons for the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted Education Programs.
(RESPONSE KEY: **1 =** Strongly Agree, **2** = Agree, **3** = Disagree, and **4** = Strongly Disagree)
Circle your answer.

	1	2	3	4
19. Culture does not value intellectual giftedness	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
20. Definition of giftedness prohibits identification of minority students	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
21. Identification process for admission into the program	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
22. Low socio-economic status of African American students prohibits their recommendation to the gifted program	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
23. Non-standard language of African American student s prohibits their identification in the gifted program	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
24. The educational level of African American parents	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
25. Race causes students not to be nominated	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
26. Late identification of African American students causes them not to stay in the gifted program	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
27. Teachers do not recognize gifted potential of African American students	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
28. Test bias works against African American Students	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
29. Student's unwillingness to participate in the program	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**

APPENDIX G

RESEARCH QUESTION AND INTERVIEW QUESTION MATRIX

Research Question & Interview Question Matrix

Research Question	Principal's Interview Questions	Focus Strand
1, 2, 3	1	Need for Gifted Services
1, 2, 3, 4	2	Set up Gifted Program
1, 2, 3, 4	3	Identifying African American Students
1, 2, 3, 4	4	Causes for Underrepresentation of African American Students
1, 2, 3, 4	5	Student Identification Despite Identification Process
1, 2, 3, 4	6	Change Identification Process to Include All Students
1, 2, 3, 4	7	Testing Contribution to Underrepresentation
1, 2, 3, 4	8	Create School Climate Accepting of Gifted Students

APPENDIX G

RESEARCH QUESTION AND SURVEY MATRIX

Research Question & Survey Matrix

Research Question	Survey Questions	Focus Strand	Primary & Secondary Research
1, 2, 3, 4	19	Culture does not Value Giftedness	Clasen, 2006 Ford, 2006 Milner and Ford 2005
1, 2, 3, 4	20	Definition of Giftedness	Ford, 1996; Maker, 1986; NAGC, 2005; Millner, 2004
1, 2, 3, 4	21	Identification Process Problematic	Kornhaber, 1999; Maker, 1986; Williams, 2000
1, 2, 3, 4	22	Low Socio-economic Inhibits Recommendation	Ford, 2006 Hamovitch, 1999
1, 2, 3, 4	23	Non-Standard Language Inhibits Identification	Maker, 1986
1, 2, 3, 4	24	Educational Level of African American Parents	Ford, 2004b; Marzano, Walters, & NcNulty, 2005
1, 2, 3, 4	25	Race Causes No Nomination	Elhoweris, Muta, Alsheikh, 2005 and Ford, 2004b
1, 2, 3, 4	26	Late Identification To Gifted Program	Milner and Ford, 2007 Polite and Davis, 1999
1, 2, 3, 4	27	Teachers do no Recognized Gifted Potential	DuFour, 2002 Ford, Moore III, and Milner
1, 2, 3, 4	28	Test Bias Work Against	Ford and Grantham, 2003 Kornhaber, 1999
1, 2, 3, 4	29	Student's Unwillingness Participate	Ford, 2004b; Ford, 1996; Ford, 1998; Grantham, 2004a; and Milner and Ford, 2005

APPENDIX I

LITERATURE MATRIX

STUDY	PURPOSE	PARTICIPANTS	DESIGN/ ANALYSIS	OUTCOMES

Kornhaber (1999)	Investigate three alternative assessments for identifying students	4th and 5th grade students in two schools on the Navajo Indian reservation (DISCOVER)
		
		2nd graders in two schools in Charlotte, NC with 40% African Americans (PSA)
		
		K-5th grade two Montgomery County, MD schools where proportional representation of African Americans and whites already existed.
			Qualitative: Interviews, observations, and documentary data	• Analyze against a framework of eight criteria:
				  1. no assessment met all eight criteria
				  2. each met a different subset of the eight criteria
				
				• Such results feed revolutionary questions:
				  1. Are American classrooms as rich for poor and minority youngsters as they are for white and affluent ones?
				  2. What else do we need to do as educators and citizens to ensure that young students' strengths are recognized and nurtured?

Hamovitch (1999)	Examine the perceptions of students, teachers, and administrators about the reasons that some academically talented, economically disadvantaged, ethnically diverse students achieve at high levels in urban high schools.	35 students	Qualitative: three-year study, comparative case study analysis of nine high-achieving female students, observations
			
			Quantitative: data gathering survey
				• Influences for achievement:
				  1. grouped together in classes
				  2. support and encouragement from each other and other adults
				  3. multiple extracurricular activities
				  4. chose not to date
				  5. strong belief in self