“I NEVER KNEW I WAS GIFTED…” – THE PERCEPTIONS OF MINORITY, GIFTED STUDENTS IN URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS.

DISSERTATION

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By

Julie E. Nelson, MA

The Ohio State University

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Dissertation Committee:

R. Michael Casto, Ph.D., Co-Advisor

Christopher T. Wood, Ph.D., Co-Advisor

Adrienne Dixson, Ph.D.

James L. Moore III, Ph.D.

College of Education & Human Ecology
This study explores the perceptions of minority, gifted high school students that attend an urban high school. The research design is mixed methodology and consists of a focus group in the qualitative piece and a survey instrument in the quantitative piece. Participants included minority, gifted students from a local urban high school and school counselors from across the State of Ohio. The goals of this study are to bring awareness to minority, gifted students, to find out if school counselors are aware of these students’ experiences, and to find out how school counselors can help improve these students’ school experiences.
DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my parents,

Colonel George Russell Nelson and JoAnne Baker Nelson,

Thank you for everything and more!
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VITA

May 30, 1980.............................................Born, Fort Ord, Monterey, California

2002..........................................................B.A., The Ohio State University

2002-2003.....................................................Graduate Administrative Associate
                                             PAES Office of Students Services
                                             The Ohio State University

2003-2007.....................................................Graduate Administrative Associate
                                             Office of Academic Affairs
                                             The Ohio State University

2004..........................................................M.A., The Ohio State University

2005 – 2007.....................................................School Counseling Supervisor
                                             The Ohio State University

2007 – Present..............................................Dean of Students
                                             Focus Learning Academy Southwest

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Education
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The plight of the gifted child in the United States is one that has remained consistently adventurous and difficult throughout history. In 1954, Margaret Mead wrote, “There is in America today an appalling waste of first-rate talents… neither teachers, the parents of other children, nor the child’s peers will tolerate the wunderkind’” (p. 211-214). Fifty years later, Davidson, Davidson, and Vanderkam (2004), wrote, “The country as a whole hasn’t made up its mind about gifted education. Educators and policy makers balance so precariously between concerns about equity and a desire for excellence that no one has made a compelling case for why nurturing the country’s brightest students should land at the top of the educational to-do list” (p. 158). O’Connell (2003) concurs with this, stating, “Over the past 50 years, sputtering attention has been paid at the federal level to the education of gifted and talented students” (p. 604). While researchers in the United States began exploring gifted education as early as 1870, the issue continues to be controversial and is lacking attention even today.
The needs of gifted students are often ignored because it is wrongly assumed that these students can fend for themselves. While all students struggle in various educational situations, gifted students are especially at-risk. Gifted students need the same amount, if not more, academic, career, and personal/social assistance than the average student. More specifically, those gifted students who are also members of a minority group are even more at-risk because of the struggle in dealing with multiple identities. Therefore, it is crucial to look at the hurdles that minority gifted students are facing in today’s schools and how this struggle affects their view of education. Why is this important? It is important because if this group of students is continually ignored and underserved, it will affect their personal and professional futures, as well as the future of the United States.

It is also important to look at the role of school counselors and how they can help minority gifted students on their educational journey. Focusing on school counselors was chosen as a component of this research study because of their ability to serve multiple roles in the school, such as leader and advocate, as well as their training and ability to provide personal/social, academic, and career counseling. This role will be discussed later in this chapter, as well as in subsequent chapters.

Chapter one addresses a number of issues that will lay the groundwork for the later study. It discusses the issues of underidentification and misidentification of minority gifted students and the consequences of these actions. Additionally, chapter one focuses on the role of school counselors and their work with minority gifted students. Finally, chapter one addresses the purpose and significance of the study.
1.1.1 Underidentification of Minority Gifted Students

While it seems clear that gifted students as a whole are being overlooked by the educational system, minority gifted students are at an even greater disadvantage. Almost 30 years ago, Coleangelo and Zaffrann (1979) wrote, “Youngsters who are culturally diverse… are often not identified for their promise. Standard measures such as IQ have proven to be inadequate indicators of the abilities of these youngsters” (p. 303). According to Ford (2002), “Despite ongoing concerns about the social and emotional needs of gifted students, few have examined those gifted students who are linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse” (p. 155). Lee and Olszewski-Kubilius (2006) write, “Many researchers and educators assert that an exclusive reliance on standardized test scores for identification will exclude a large body of gifted students, including those who are culturally and ethnically different from the mainstream gifted population” (ERIC No. EJ752173). For almost 30 years, the lack of minority students in gifted education has been a concern and a point of discussion. What, however, is the answer to this dilemma?

1.1.2 Misidentification of Minority Gifted Students

In addition to being underidentified in gifted education, minority students are also often misidentified as having some sort of learning, developmental, or behavioral disorder. Often, their gifted behavior is seen not as academically advanced, but as a social or behavioral issue that needs to be addressed with discipline or special education courses. According to Ford (1996),

“Black students, particularly males, are three times as likely as White males to be in a class for the educable mentally retarded, but only half as likely to be placed in
a class for the gifted. Not only are Black students underenrolled in gifted education programs, they are underrepresented in academic tracks, high-ability groups, and academic programs at all educational levels – kindergarten through grade 12, baccalaureate degrees, and graduate degrees” (p. 5).

It is therefore difficult for minority students to (1) become labeled as gifted and (2) to receive services.

This issue of qualifying and receiving gifted services is especially pertinent to the lives of urban gifted students. So often in these urban districts, resources are limited and the focus is constantly on those students who are causing discipline problems or falling through the cracks academically. Davidson, et al. (2004) write, “All children in schools where solving discipline problems or merely avoiding chaos is more important that learning, suffer from diminished instruction. The brightest suffer most, because they experience the greatest gap between their talents and their opportunities” (p. 58).

In addition to minority students being misidentified and underidentified, those who are successfully identified still have trouble receiving services. Depending on where students attend school, gifted programs are often minimal or unavailable entirely. The lack of gifted programs is most often experienced in impoverished districts where resources are scarce or unavailable entirely. Students of color often overwhelmingly populate these impoverished districts. Slocumb (2001) writes, “It is the underrepresentation of gifted children from poverty that crosses all racial and cultural groups and that presents the greatest challenge” (p. 6).
1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study will explore the educational experiences of minority, gifted high school students who attend an urban high school. While a small amount of recent research has explored the issue of gifted minority students (Herbert & Reis, 1999, Ford & Grantham, 2003), there is little empirical research that exists that asks students to describe their personal experience. Due to the lack of understanding and research on the issue of the minority gifted students, this study hopes to (1) open new doors of understanding to what minority gifted students in urban high school experience in their everyday lives. Additionally, it hopes to (2) examine the profession of school counseling and determine if current school counselors are in touch with the issues presented by the aforementioned students. Current and past research on each of these topics will be discussed in chapter two.

1.3 Significance of Study

Minority gifted students attending urban high schools are unknown and unheard in their school experience. This study of their individual experiences is significant because it explores an area of gifted education that is largely untouched in current research (Ford, 1998). In order to understand the current state of gifted education and the role that minority students’ play in today’s educational system, it is important to explore the students’ experiences in their everyday educational lives and how these experiences affect their future. In addition, it is important to determine whether educators, and specifically, school counselors, have an effect on the educational experiences of these students.
With the pressure on gifted minority students, both from themselves and from others, it is the responsibility of the school counselor to help them maneuver these choppy waters of both academic achievement and personal identity with their culture. As Davis et. al. (2004) write, “As a general rule, the greater the gift, the greater the counseling need” (p. 425). School counselors serve as advocates for all students, so it is only natural that they should step in to better assist these exceptional students. Because of their ability to work on academic, career, and personal/social issues, school counselors would be able to help minority gifted students in all areas of life by improving their school experience and, thus, helping make them more well-rounded individuals. In order to fulfill this obligation, the role of school counselor must first be understood.

The role of the school counselor is one that is often misunderstood and controversial due to the fragmented state of the profession across the country (Martin, 2002). With new reforms occurring such as the Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI), school counselors are encouraged to move away from traditional paperwork and testing and focus on personal/social, career, and academic counseling while also taking a leadership role in their respective schools. In this reformed role, school counselors have the opportunity to help all students, including those gifted minority students who are not being well-served. According to Ford (1996), “Counselors… are in an ideal position to serve as catalysts for change; they must seek to integrate and implement change” (p. 113). The school counselor is an ideal person to step in and aid gifted students with a variety of issues. According to the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) (2006),
“The role of the professional school counselor in gifted and talented programs may be as follows: 1) Assisting in the identification of gifted and talented students through the use of a multiple criterion system utilized in their school district, which may include: Intellectual ability, academic performance, visual and performing arts ability, practical arts ability, creative thinking ability, leadership potential, parent, teacher, peer nomination, expert evaluation. 2) Advocating for the inclusion of activities that effectively address the personal/social, and career development needs, in addition to the academic needs of identified gifted and talented students. 3) Assisting in promoting understanding and awareness of the special issues that may affect gifted and talented students including: underachievement, perfectionism, depression, dropping out, delinquency, difficulty in peer relationships, career development, meeting expectations, goal setting, questioning others’ values. 4) Providing individual and group counseling for gifted and talented students, as warranted. 5) Recommending material and resources for gifted and talented programs and teachers and parents of gifted and talented students. 6) Engaging in professional development activities through which knowledge and skills in the area of programming for the needs of the gifted and talented are regularly upgraded” (American School Counseling Association, 2006).

In concurrence with the ASCA position statement, it is necessary for school counselors to take appropriate measures to make sure that all gifted students are being identified, included, encouraged, and challenged in their school environment.
When examining gifted minority students, it is also important to understand the big picture that underserving these students is adversely affecting society in general. Not only is the future of these gifted minority students endangered, but society will reap the consequences of stifling this talent. Specifically, consequences of this have been noted in both technology and professional education.

Konrad (2005) discusses the vast underrepresentation of women and minorities in technology in the U.S, writing,

“With such underrepresentation, fewer people are available to work in high-tech, putting the nation at a disadvantage compared with China and India, where universities are graduating hundreds of thousands of science and engineering students per year- in some cases with nearly equal numbers of women and men” (http://usatoday.com/tech/news/2005-06-22-job-disparity_x.htm).

Over time, the issue of the lack of minority representation has become more and more apparent in professional education. For example, according to Hjorth (1999),

“Racial minorities constitute about 7 percent of the lawyers in America and about 20 percent of students in law schools accredited by the American Bar Association. Yet these minorities constitute 30 percent of our society and in the next few decades people of color will constitute 50 percent of the U.S. population. Racial minorities are seriously underrepresented in the legal profession” (http://www.law.washington.edu/news/DeanCol/99-00/10-25-99.html).

Underrepresentation in education, however, is not simply limited to the student population. According to Basler (2008),
“Nationally, only 2 percent of the approximately 13,317 superintendents are black or African-American, a report from the American Association of School Administrators indicates… The figures are better for principals and have edged up slightly, but they still are not representative, Lawson said. In 2003-04, blacks held 9.3 percent of principals' positions nationwide, compared to 8.7 percent 10 years earlier, figures from the National Center for Education Statistics indicate” (¶ 7 & 8).

Not only is student representation in higher education skewed and lacking minorities, but the leadership of these institutions is lacking diversity as well. How can one encourage diversity when institutionally, it is not being encouraged? Basler (2008) continued,

“Porter [Gerald Porter, dean of the School of Education at SUNY-Cortland] sees this as a real problem because minority students need to see people of color in leadership positions and so do students in predominantly white districts. ‘White students need to understand they'll be living in a world with a much higher proportion of people of color," he said” (¶ 10).

Hammond and Paige (1999) raised a similar issue regarding minority representation in the field of accounting. They wrote,

“Young African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans making professional choices in the past few decades have had few CPA role models in their families… historically, minority-group members have interacted with some degree of frequency with attorneys and doctors, but because of uneven wealth
distribution they are less likely to have interacted with financial professionals” (p. 77).

These are just a few examples of how underserving gifted minority students could affect the future of society. Not only are these individual students losing opportunities, but the future of the United States could be affected. As Ford (2003) writes, “The persistent and pervasive underrepresentation of diverse students in gifted education is likely to have devastating, long-lasting effects” (p. 518).

1.4 Research Questions

In order to address the unknown issues with gifted students, the following questions will be studied:

1. What are the perceptions of minority, gifted students who do or do not participate in the gifted education program at their urban high school?

2. In the state of Ohio, how aware are currently employed school counselors of the experiences of the minority, gifted student?

1.5 Overview

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter one introduces the issues, the purpose of the study, why it is significant, the research question, potential implications, and definitions of terminology that will be utilized throughout this document. Chapter two discusses the research question(s) and gives an in-depth overview of historical and current literature addressing with the issues of urban gifted students. The methodology of the study is discussed in Chapter three. Chapter four discusses and analyzes the data collected from the study. Finally, Chapter five discusses the conclusions
of the study and the implications for the fields of gifted education and school counseling.

1.6 Definitions of Terminology

*Gifted*

“‘Gifted’ means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of section 3324.03 of the revised code” OHIO REV. CODE ANN. § 3324.01, 2004, (Education Commission of States, 2004).

In addition, the Ohio Department of Education identifies students as gifted in one or more of the following categories: 1) superior cognitive ability, 2) specific academic ability, 3) creative thinking ability, and 4) visual and performing arts (Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-15, 2000). For those students identified under “specific academic ability,” they can be identified in one or more of the following subjects: math, science, reading/writing, and social studies (CPS, 2000).

The large urban district where the study was conducted has the following view of gifted education:

“The fundamental belief of the Gifted & Talented Program is that all students should be provided an appropriate, challenging learning environment. The program supports a continuum of services, K-12, district wide. Activities are based upon individual student interest, ability, creativity and demonstrated achievement. Many program options are available to provide opportunities to students for curriculum differentiation, flexible pacing, alternative programming
and acceleration. In addition, this program supports and facilitates significant and ongoing professional growth in gifted education for staffs. The program staff collaborates with a citywide parent group—Parents for Academic Challenge and Enrichment (PACE) - in advocating for appropriate services for gifted students. The program promotes opportunities for parents, community, and schools to cooperate in accomplishing this mission”
(http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/gifted/overview.html, 2007).

**Minority**

“A part of a population differing from others in some characteristics and often subjected to differential treatment” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2006).

“‘Minority youth’ means any youth that is not Caucasian.” (Ohio Revised Code, 5139-67-01, [http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5139-67-01](http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5139-67-01))

**Misidentified**

The term that describes the abundance of minority students who are incorrectly labeled as having a learning, developmental, or behavioral disorder.

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

“The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) -- the main federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school. NCLB is built on four principles: accountability for results, more choices for parents, greater local control and flexibility, and an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research” (US Department of Education, 2006).
School Counselor

According to the American School Counseling Association (2007), “the professional school counselor is a certified/licensed educator trained in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address all students’ academic, personal/social and career development needs. Professional school counselors implement a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes and enhances student achievement. Professional school counselors are employed in elementary, middle/junior high and high schools and in district supervisory, counselor education and post-secondary settings. Their work is differentiated by attention to developmental stages of student growth, including the needs, tasks and student interests related to those stages” (ASCA, 2007)

Transforming School Counseling Initiative

“The Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI) was implemented at the Education Trust with the express goal of encouraging the creation of new model programs for the pres-service training of schools counselors. The purpose of these newly designed programs was to prepare graduates to serve as student advocates and academic advisors who demonstrate the belief that all students can achieve at high levels on rigorous, challenging academic course content” (Martin, 2002, p. 148).

Underidentified

This term describes the failure to identify gifted characteristics in minority students.
“Urban districts--We propose defining the term urban districts as those with a designated locale code of Large Central City (1) or Mid-Size Central City (2) using the National Center for Education Statistics' National Public School and School District Locator (available online at http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/).” (Federal Register, 2004)

“Urban – low median income, high poverty. This category includes urban (i.e. high population density) districts that encompass small or medium size towns and cities. They are characterized by low median incomes and very high poverty rates. N=102, Approximate total ADM=290,000.” (ODE, 2007)

“Major Urban – very high poverty - This group of districts includes all of the six largest core cities and other urban districts that encompass major cities. Population densities are very high. The districts all have very high poverty rates and typically have a very high percentage of minority students. N=15, Approximate total ADM=360,000.” (ODE, 2007)
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

“Why are diverse students underrepresented – consistently and grossly underrepresented – in gifted education programs?” (Ford, 2003, p. 506). This question is crucial when discussing the issue of minority gifted students in the United States. While many educators, parents, and others are asking this question, who is answering it? This chapter will explore research on the issue of minority gifted students, factors and individuals that affect their experiences, and the role of the school counselor in their everyday lives. Specifically, the following will be discussed: the background of the issue, barriers to achievement, perceptions and experiences, and counseling minority gifted students.

2.2 Background of Issue

“One of the most persistent, troubling, and controversial issues in education is the disproportionate representation of minority students in special education, including gifted education” (Ford, 1998, p. 4). While many gifted students in the United States are being inadequately served, gifted students of color and those who belong to other underserved populations are especially struggling. Frasier (1989) writes, “Despite all efforts toward
equity in schools, minority and poor students remain noticeably absent from gifted programs” (p. 16). Written more than 15 years ago, this sentiment still rings true today, with only a small amount of research devoting itself to studying these students. According to Ford (1998), “…only 8% of the articles on gifted students found in the ERIC database during the past three decades focused on gifted minority students” (p. 4). Grantham (2004) writes, “… too many black students receive negative peer pressure for achieving academically and, subsequently, many choose to underachieve, underinvest in academics, and not participate in gifted programs” (p. 212). As this literature review will show, the amount of research on gifted students, in general, is lacking, as is much specific research focused on minority gifted students. It is crucial to explore the issues affecting gifted minority students in urban schools today. Understanding the many barriers and issues facing minority gifted students as they attempt to gain an education, maintain their cultural identity, and successfully negotiate the school environment is key to finding a solution to the problems they face.

2.3 Barriers to Achievement

While there are many factors that can influence the educational path of minority students, Ford (1996) writes of social, environmental, and educational barriers that hold back gifted minority students from achieving. While these barriers are not exclusive to gifted minority students, they are often discussed in the literature as specific and documented reasons that gifted minority students struggle. These three barriers (social, environmental, and educational) will be discussed in greater detail below and will serve as the basis for the discussion of minority gifted students and their struggles in education.
Both the views of society and those of their peers affect many gifted minority students. “…peer pressure tends to undermine the achievement of many capable Black students…” (Ford and Harris, 1994, p. 212). Ford, Baytops, and Harmon (1997) continue, “[Students] were concerned about negative peer pressures and isolation as well as poor relationship with gifted education teachers who may hold low expectations of racially and culturally diverse students. Some minority students may also have racial-identity conflicts whereby they equate academic achievement with ‘acting white…”’ (p. 208).

What does it mean to “act white?” According to Ford (1996), “Gifted or achieving black students may be accused of ‘acting white’ and rejecting the black culture when they achieve in school” (p. 193). Ogbu (2004) points out that “acting white” is not a new phenomenon and is something that African Americans have experienced as far back as the time of slavery.

“…Black students face the same burden of “acting white” that Black Americans have faced throughout their history and still face in the contemporary United States… Second, in the course of their history, Black Americans had to cope with peer or community pressures against “acting White”… The social sanctions or pressures and the coping strategies still exist in contemporary Black community and are shared by Black Students” (Ogbu, 2004, p. 30).

Butler (2003) concurs, stating, “…for some urban African American adolescents, such behaviors may result in bullying, ridicule, social isolation, reduced peer and social self-
McGregor (2005) writes, “New evidence in the national controversy over the Black-white achievement gap in schools indicates that peer-pressure against ‘acting white’ may be largely to blame for the disparity…” (p. 15).

Tyson, Darity, Jr., and Castellino (2005) also looked at the phenomenon of “acting white” and whether or not this was actively experienced in secondary schools. Tyson et al. (2005) conducted a study in North Carolina that included feedback from 11 schools (6 high schools and 2 middle schools) and exclusively focused on Black students, finding that in the majority of the schools surveyed, Black students were not experiencing the “acting white” phenomenon. Tyson et al. wrote (2005),

“Our interviews revealed ambivalence toward achievement among black students at just one of eight secondary schools. Contrary to the burden of acting white hypothesis, the black students in this study who avoided advanced courses did so for fear or not doing well academically” (p. 599).

This conclusion is very different from what many individuals assume about the “burden of acting white” and the frequency with which it occurs in urban schools. Tyson et al. (2005) show in their research that while this is a phenomenon that does occur, it is not happening everywhere and may not be happening as often as people anticipate.

Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey (1998) conducted a study where they researched the oppositional culture explanation and found similar results:

“Using data from a national survey, we found that the model is inconsistent with the data in several ways. The fundamental flaw of Ogbu's (1978; 1991a) oppositional culture explanation is that African American students do not perceive
fewer returns to education and more limited occupational opportunities than do whites. Without support for this cornerstone of the theory, African Americans' relative lack of skills, habits, and styles is open to alternative explanations” (p. 547).

This research is important to acknowledge as this study on minority gifted students proceeds.

2.3.2 Environmental Barriers

Minority gifted students are affected by numerous environmental factors; specifically, poverty and chaotic surroundings (home, school, and community) are some of the most predominant. Gutman, McLloyd, and Tokoyawa (2005) found, “… a disproportionate number of African American families live in inner-city neighborhoods and face a multitude of stressed associated with their living conditions…” (p. 444).

The impact of poverty on the lives of these students cannot be understated. According to Slocumb (2001), “It is the underrepresentation of gifted children from poverty that crosses all racial and cultural groups and that presents the greatest challenge” (p. 6). Rank and Hirschl (1999) conducted a study on poverty over an individual’s lifespan. Their findings provide the following:

“… by the age of 25, 48.1 percent of black Americans will have experienced at least one year in poverty. At age 40 the figure is two-thirds, and by age 50, more than three-fourths of the black population will have spent some time below the poverty line. For black Americans who reach age 75, 91 percent will have been touched by the experience of poverty (this is made more remarkable by the fact
that our analysis precludes the risk of poverty during the first 19 years of life)” (Rank and Hirschl, 1999, p. 207).

Family and home life also play a large role in the lives of gifted minority students. According to Davis and Rimm (2004), “While family problems are not unique to students in these groups, it is true that complicated and temporary marital relationships, alcohol abuse, mobility, and other forms of stress and instability are common” (p. 291). Additionally, there is a distrust of the educational system and a fear of what consequences labeling a child (whether gifted or otherwise) or family will bring. According to Ford (1998), “…Minority families remain apprehensive that school personnel may stereotype families that are less affluent, have different family values, have lower educational attainment levels, and have lower status occupations” (p. 11). In addition, Ford and Harris (1994) write,

“They [gifted students] have been taught by America’s social structure that the American achievement ideology is inapplicable to them; they have been taught by the myths, racial stereotypes, culturally biased tests, and the schools that the choice between supporting one’s own culture or the dominant culture is really no choice at all” (p. 222).

2.3.3 Educational Barriers

Even though schools are viewed as a place where students are well supported and encouraged to achieve, barriers for gifted minority students still exist in these environments. One barrier in education is the underrepresentation of minority students in gifted education and their overrepresentation in special education. African American
students and other students of color are largely unrepresented in gifted education programs. Donovan & Cross (2002) determined,

“Comparing these rates for the four racial/ethnic groups with that of white students reveals that black students are more than twice as likely to be identified as mentally retarded… with American Indian/Alaskan Natives being identified at about the same rate as whites... Both Hispanics… and Asian/Pacific Islander… are considerably less at risk than are whites for identification as MR. The composition index for the racial/ethnic groups suggests that whites constitute approximately 54 percent of the total MR enrollments (compared with 63 percent of the student population), while blacks account for 33 percent of the MR enrollments but only 17 percent of the student population” (p. 44).

Donovan and Cross (2002) continue, writing, “…current patterns of over- and underrepresentation in special education and for gifted and talented services are likely to continue unless substantial improvements in levels of minority students’ achievement are realized “ (p. 288).

Ford (1996) concurs, writing, “…gifted programs represent the most segregated programs in public school; they are disproportionately white and middle class, and they serve primarily intellectually and academically gifted students as opposed to students who are gifted in other areas of endeavor…” (p. x) Why are these numbers so disproportionate? Grantham and Ford (2003) identify the following three reasons: (1) lack of participation by African American students and their families in gifted programs,
(2) bias of standardized tests, and (3) the lack of teacher referrals of African American students to gifted programs (Grantham et al., 2003).

Sanders (1998) writes of the many issues within the school and community that effect African-American students ability to achieve academically. While she does not speak specifically to gifted students, her study of academic achievement in urban schools allows educators to analyze the factors that affect African American students and their learning experiences. In turn, these experiences could be used as an impetus for changing how minority students are treated in gifted education. Sanders (1998) studied 827 students in the Southeastern US who attended an urban high school and focused on these factors: (1) teacher support, (2) parental support, (3) church involvement, (4) achievement ideology, (5) academic self-concept, (6) school behavior, and (7) academic achievement. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used in this study to assess factors that contributed to make these students successful.

In addition to underrepresentation in gifted education, minority students are also overrepresented in special education courses. Ford (1996) writes, “Black students are overrepresented in special education, in the lowest ability groups and tracks, and among high school and college dropouts, the underemployed and unemployed, and accordingly, the economically disadvantaged” (p. 5-6). Specifically, “…black students, particularly males, are three times as likely as white males to be in a class for the educable mentally retarded…” (p. 5). Callahan (2005) sums it up best, writing, “…looking for means of identifying the underrepresented gifted students requires more than surface-level examination of tests or rating scales. It requires examination of deeply held beliefs and
longstanding practices, as well as a willingness to restructure thinking and behavior…” (p. 104).

Oswald, Coutinjo, Best, and Singh (1999) conducted a study focused on the overrepresentation of minority students in special education. Oswad et al. (1999) conducted a quantitative study to address the issue of why minority students and particularly, African American students, are overrepresented in special education. The study specifically looked at the number of students that qualified as mildly mentally retarded (MMR) and seriously emotionally disturbed (SED). Using a sample of 4,455 school districts from the 1992 Elementary and Secondary School Civil Rights Compliance Report, the study determined that “For the country as a whole, African American students are nearly 2 ½ times as likely to be identified as MMR and about 1 ½ times as likely to be identified as SED as compared to their non-African American peers” (Oswald et al., 1999, p. 203). This finding is consistent with the concerns mentioned in this study. Oswald et al. (1999) summarize this concern well, stating,

“This data affirms that despite the litigation, regulatory provisions in IDEA, and emerging vision of holistic multicultural education, we need to be concerned that too many African American children do not have the same learning opportunities as their peers, and that they are identified as disabled in a disproportionate fashion as compared to those peers. These data suggest that the federal intent to be more successful with African American special education has not been fulfilled” (p. 204).
In addition to the underrepresentation/overrepresentation issue, the academic underachievement of gifted minority students is also a concern. According to Rimm (2003), “Underachievement occurs when children’s habits, efforts, and skills cause them to lose their sense of control over school outcomes. Teachers are less likely to identify these students as gifted because their intelligence or creativity may no longer be evident in the classroom” (p. 425). Many factors are mentioned in the literature as to why these gifted minority student underachieve academically. When specifically looking at minority students, Ford (1998) concurs, stating, “…underachievers are less likely to be referred for screening and identification and to be identified as gifted…” (p. 10). While underachievement is an issue with all students, and more specifically with gifted students, it also becomes glaringly obvious that underachievement by minority gifted students could have incredibly negative long-term effects.

Finally, the issue of school personnel as a barrier to academic success for gifted minority students is important to review. While school personnel are the individuals that are there to teach all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, or ability level, many are ill trained for working with a diverse population. This lack of awareness and education is contributing to the continued suppression of minority students. West-Olatunju, Baker, and Brooks (2006) found,

“With the minimal representation of African American males in gifted classes, countered by their excessive representation in low-track, remedial, and/or special education classes, teachers may subconsciously perceive these students as academically inferior compared to their white peers. The disproportionately low
numbers of African American students in gifted programs can, inadvertently, serve to reinforce White privilege and entitlement among students while simultaneously reinforcing second-class citizenship among African American children” (p. 8).

Because teachers and their other educational counterparts are often the first individuals to identify students as gifted, those educators who are without multicultural awareness are not labeling minority students as gifted. Shealey and Lue (2006) found, “Approximately 43% of the culturally and linguistically diverse students in the United States attend schools in which more than half of the students are poor and predominately minority. However, only 20% of the teachers trained in teacher education programs are representative of culturally and linguistically diverse groups” (p. 6).

Harry, Klinger, and Hart (2005) conducted a qualitative study on this issue and researched how school personnel view African American students and their families. The researchers completed their qualitative study in 12 urban schools over a three-year period. Harry et al. (2005) wrote, “We found that the stereotype of the neglectful and incompetent African American parent was alive and well in the belief system of school personnel. The term dysfunctional was applied to families based on single pieces of information that were often unsupported by any evidence” (p. 104). Later, Harry et al. (2005) found that the discrimination and belittling of African American parents was not limited to strictly white teachers:
“It was evident that shared ethnicity did not ensure respectful treatment. We saw rude treatment of parents by school personnel of the same ethnicity as the parents as well as of different ethnicities. Furthermore, we noted that some team members would be polite and respectful to parents whom they saw as worthy and outright rude to those whom they disdained” (p. 105).

Overall, this qualitative study reinforced the idea that school personnel are often part of the problem with minority gifted students instead of being part of the solution.

While these recent studies give valuable insight into the educational barriers faced by minority gifted students, these barriers are not a new phenomenon. In 1965, Torrance wrote the following:

“Those who work with disadvantaged youth would probably do well to show an interest in what these young people have learned and can do rather than in what grades they made in school. Many of them are keenly aware of the shallowness and inadequacy of the grading systems to which they have been subjected. The use of difficult achievement tests sampling a wide range of knowledge will reveal some of the discrepancies between what young people know and what teacher grades say that they know” (p. 10).

With all of the struggles that minority gifted students face in schools on a daily basis, it is essential to better equip, educate, and train school personnel so they may positively impact the lives of minority gifted students.
2.4 Perceptions and Experiences

What is it like to be a student of color in a gifted education program? While research is often conducted on why diversity is lacking in gifted programs (as discussed above), it is rare that one hears the voices of students who are members of these underrepresented groups. According to Ford (1996), “Too little research exists on how gifted Black students perceive the process of schooling” (p. 153). It is important to hear these voices so that educators can better understand the struggles that these students face and learn what the best practices are to meet the needs of these students. While books such as *And Still We Rise* by Miles Corwin and *A Hope in the Unseen* by Ron Suskind give a closer and more meaningful view into the lives of minority gifted students, the lack of substantial research literature provides little insight. This lack of research makes it difficult to truly hear the voices of these students. A study conducted by West-Olatunju, Baker, and Brooks (2006) discussed black male students and their educational experiences. Two studies conducted in the last ten years by Grantham (2004) and Herbert and Reis (1999) do look specifically at the experiences of gifted students.

West-Olatunju et al. (2006) conducted a qualitative research study reviewing the school experience of African American male students. Using eight African American male adolescent students, the researchers conducted a focus group and found the following themes: (1) perceived lack of respect received in school settings, (2) boredom with teaching methods, (3) preference for their after-school program over school, (4) awareness of education inequities (West-Olatunju et al., 2006, p. 6). The researchers found that “When African American youth feel valued and respected, regularly hear
positive affirmation about themselves, and have role models implicitly integrated into their learning experiences, they become more engaged in learning” (p. 7).

Grantham (2004) conducted one of the rare studies on minority gifted students completed in recent years. According to Grantham (2004), “The primary goal of this study was to explore Black males’ motivation to participate in gifted and advanced level programs using a single case-study approach” (p. 208). Grantham (2004) chose to do a single case study of a student named “Rocky Jones,” a 9th grade, African American, male student. “Rocky” came from a single parent home, was one of only 2 black male students in the gifted program, and attended high school in what the author describes as a “semi-rural” part of Virginia (Grantham, 2004).

To evaluate the experience of “Rocky,” Grantham (2004) utilized the “Participation Motivation Expectancy-Value Model,” or PMEVM. Grantham (2004) explained the PMEVM, saying:

“The PMEVM frames these decisions relative to three constructs: participation competence expectancy; participation outcome attainment expectancy; and value of participation outcomes… Participation competence expectancy… this component is defined as a student’s belief that he/she is able to perform at a desired level as a gifted program participant… Participation outcome attainment expectancy… This component related to a student’s believe that effort will lead to benefits or consequences as result of gifted program participation… Value of participation outcomes… This component relates to values held by students and
the impact of these values on their decision to participate in gifted programs” (p. 209).

Based on this model and using the single case study method of evaluation, Grantham (2004) came to the following four conclusions on what factors can encourage black male students to participate in gifted programming: (1) overcoming stereotypes, (2) emphasis on organization and study habits, (3) affirmation of academic potential, and (4) reframing peer notions of acting white (p. 214).

While interesting, this study does have its limitations. One limitation is the generalizability of the single case study method. Another limitation is that the study only spoke to one male gifted minority student; what would the experience in the same school be for a gifted black female? These limitations could be addressed in a future study by expanding the work already done by Grantham (2004).

Another study explored the issue of the experiences of students that are not necessarily labeled as “gifted,” but are considered “high-achieving.” Hebert and Reis (1999) conducted this qualitative study on the experience of high-achieving students in an urban high school. The researchers looked at 18 male and female students who were identified as Caucasian, Hispanic, and African American in grades from 10 through 12. According to Hebert and Reis (1999),

“When the successful students in the study were compared to a similar group of high-ability students who did not achieve, no relationship was found between socioeconomic level and achievement, between parental divorce and achievement, or between family size and achievement” (p. 442).
The major strength of this study was that it was one of few studies that gave insight into the lives of urban students who have high academic ability. In addition to giving specific quotes from students, the article pinpointed what assisted students in achieving.

According to Herbert and Reis (1999), the following factors influenced academic achievement: (1) development of a strong belief in self, (2) supportive adults, (3) network of achieving peers, (4) extracurricular activities, (5) challenging learning experiences, (6) personal characteristics, (7) resilience, and (8) family support (p. 443). With awareness of these specific factors, school counselors have the opportunity to find ways to encourage students and assist them in finding ways to achieve these goals and help improve their personal academic achievement.

The major limitation of this study was that it was limited to a sample of 18 students in a single urban school. While these students gave insight into their experiences and gave some idea of what factors influence their ability to achieve, it is still a small number of students in a single environment. To gain even more generalizability this study could be replicated in multiple urban high schools and studied to see if the same seven factors presented for high achieving students. In addition, it would be interesting to analyze how students who were specifically identified as gifted, learning disabled, or both would respond and if the characteristics would be similar to this study.

These three studies give beneficial analysis of the various experiences of minority gifted students. It is still, however, not enough.
2.5 Counseling Minority Gifted Students

With the numerous challenges and issues that gifted minority students face today, it is crucial to review the involvement of school counselors and what role they can play in helping these students succeed. Following the model of the Transforming School Counseling Initiative (1996), the following three areas will be discussed: academic, career, and personal/social counseling.

2.5.1 Academic

While gifted students may be intellectually advanced in one or more areas, this factor does not always translate to good grades or excelling academically in the school environment. In addition to the personal/social and career issues that will be discussed later, the academic endeavors and struggles of gifted students have all been documented in the literature. Recently, Reis, Colbert, and Hebert (2005) conducted a qualitative study of 35 urban high school students and their academic achievement. Reis et al. (2005) found that, “While some academically talented students developed the work habits and resilience they needed to survive or excel, others withered quietly, forgotten and anonymous in a large high school where few teachers realized their potential” (p. 118). After discussing how the school counselor could be an advocate for these students, Reis et al. (2005) discussed the affect that school counselor intervention could have on students’ academic achievement:

“With strengthened academic experiences, the underachieving students in this study may have entered high school with enhanced academic self-concepts, continued motivation for learning, and stronger beliefs in themselves. These
school counseling program activities could have been an essential component of an ongoing program, and we can only speculate that if these students had the opportunity to participate in this type of school counseling program, they would have had a mediating mechanism for remaining on an appropriate development trajectory to realize their high potential and achieve their goals” (p. 118).

2.5.2 Personal/Social

While considered intellectually advanced when compared with their peers, gifted students are not always mature psychologically or socially; Blackburn and Erickson (1986) refer to this as “developmental immaturity” (p. 552). Gifted students experience many of the same (if not more) challenges that their classmates do; in adolescence, these challenges can be considerable. As Snyder (2000) writes, “Many gifted students have poor self-esteem and are stressed; by the pressure, both real, and imagined, to succeed academically” (p. 177). Ford and Harris (1995) also explore this idea: “…gifted students have been found to have special fears, anxieties, and stresses… Because their mental abilities often outpace their physical abilities, these students may become easily frustrated, and feel helpless and hopeless…” (p. 196). In addition to these struggles, gifted minority students have the added element of cultural identity that they are forced to deal with.

Minority gifted students, and specifically gifted African American students, face many challenges in the school environment as they walk the fine line between identifying with their racial and cultural identity and their gifted identity. According to Ford (1996), “Once placed in gifted programs, Black students make numerous social sacrifices
and take many risks. They risk, for example, the rejection of black peers, who may perceive gifted Black students as being untrue to their cultural and racial group; they risk isolation and alienation from White peers in the gifted program who do not understand Black students... these feelings of isolation and alienation may result in a forced choice between friendships and school... the school and gifted program too often lose” (p. 79).

Lindstrom and Van Sant (1986) concur with this analysis, stating, ‘The child identified by the system may really be ‘between a rock and a hard place’ because peer rejection often experienced by gifted children can be intensified by the cultural expectations of the minority group” (p. 584). They continue discussing a specific student and his experience being both gifted and a minority; the student said, “I had to fight to be gifted and then I had to fight because I am gifted” (p. 584). This quote sums up the difficulty that gifted minority students face on a daily basis. Whether from their school, peers, themselves, or society, gifted minority students constantly deal with pressure and scrutiny about who they are and what abilities they possess.

More recently, Grantham & Ford (2003) discussed the issue of African-American students and their racial identity development and how this factor can effect academic achievement. Specifically, they addressed how the most current racial identity model by Cross and Vandiver in 2001 could affect gifted African American students and their feelings toward school. They discussed how African American students are underrepresented in gifted education and looked at three main points that they feel contribute to this underrepresentation. They identified these three points as: (1) lack of
participation by African American students and their families in gifted programs, (2) bias of standardized tests, and (3) the lack of teacher referrals of African American students to gifted programs (Grantham & Ford, 2003). They hypothesized how this model of racial identity development related to an individual students’ academic achievement, based on where he/she are in the process of self-actualization of their racial identity. They hypothesized based on the findings of Ford (1996) and Ford, Harris, and Schuerger (1993), “It is important to note that a person’s racial identity may be directly or indirectly related to his or her academic achievement” (p. 18). In addition, Grantham and Ford (2003) wrote, “Specifically, there may be a curvilinear relationship between racial identity and achievement with those in the earliest stage (e.g., pre-encounter) and those in the last stages (e.g., internalization-commitment) having the highest achievement orientation” (p. 18).

The strength of this article was the discussion of the school counselor in the section that gave suggestions on how to improve this phenomenon. According to Ford and Grantham (2003), “Counseling strategies and initiatives need to be designed to help Black students with poor racial identities …to understand and appreciate their dual identities of being both gifted and Black” (p. 18). This is an ideal area for the school counselor to be challenged and take initiative in the school and particularly, to advocate for gifted students. Grantham and Ford (2003) suggested a variety of initiatives for aiding African American gifted students, including mentoring experiences, multicultural counseling and education for students and school personnel, and family education. The
school counselor could easily implement these activities into their role as a student advocate, as well as a collaborator with the community.

2.5.3 Career

Much like the high expectations that society has for gifted students relating to academic and personal/social maturity, society also has the same lofty goals for career aspirations and endeavors of gifted students. While many would assume that career goals and aspirations are straightforward for academically advanced students, this assumption is often not the case. Lindstrom and Van Sant (1986) discussed the issue of minority gifted students and their career aspirations, writing, “It is discouraging to face both multiple options and multiple external pressures… this problem is intensified for the student from a racial minority group. The resulting stress can lead to discouragement and a resistance to plan and make decisions” (p. 584). Greene (2006) expanded on this point, writing,

“Career counseling of gifted and talented students must acknowledge the unique career and life development issues that may impact their career planning. Common issues are multipotentiality, early emergence and foreclosure, personality traits, the overemphasis on academic, and the expectations of others” (Academic Search Complete database).

2.5.4 Working with Minority Gifted Students

How do these ideas, in turn, apply to those minority gifted students and their interactions with the school counselor? Ford et al. (1995) wrote about the particular challenges that face African American students, saying, “Data indicate that the academic
success and retention of African American students are influenced more by the person-environment transactions and related sociocultural influences than by intellectual and academic factors…” (Ford & et al., 1995, p. 196). Knowing this, school counselors must increase their purposeful and frequent interactions with gifted minority students. Ford et al. (1995) continue, “African American students may be even less likely to seek guidance and counseling, particularly those who hold negative images of Whites in general (and by extension, White counselors)” (p. 196). Counselors must be aware of the impact race and ethnicity play in their relationships with their students. Multicultural education and training designed for working with gifted students are just two recommendation that Ford et al. (1995) provide for school counselors working with gifted African American students. Ford, Moore, and Harmon (2005) concur with the idea of multicultural training, stating,

“With the increasing diversity, there comes the need to change many school practices, not only in terms of increasing the representation of students of color in gifted education but also in terms of more effectively meeting the academic needs of students who are gifted and diverse” (p. 125).

Additional recommendations from Ford et al. (1995) include encouraging school counselors to look beyond simple test scores and raw data for a more complete view of their students. Callahan (2005) concurs with this assessment, writing, “The measurement field has long warned against the use of one test or one assessment score as the basis of making a high-stakes judgment about a child” (p. 101). Ford et al. (1995) also encourage counselors at all levels to collaborate with each other so that gifted students can be
thoroughly supported as they move throughout their academic career, from K-12 and beyond. As Butler (2003) writes, “Counselors could, in turn, also serve as social change agents within their school settings in terms of addressing discriminatory attitudes and behaviors by teachers, administrators, and students toward African American students” (p. 51). Butler’s (2003) sentiment is supported above when discussing school counselors and their role in aiding minority gifted students. Finally, Hanson (2002) writes, “School counselors in the new millennium will be advocates for all students to receive a challenging and high quality education. Educational equity will guide their efforts to organize students need to be effective and successful learners” (p. 181).

2.6 Conclusion

While the above research discussed many of the important factors and phenomenon surrounding the issue facing minority gifted students, it also shows the gaps in the research that exist when examining the specific experiences of these students. In order to address these gaps in the research, the questions addressed in chapter one will be studied. The following chapters will explore these questions, beginning with the methodology of the study in chapter three.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This research study explores the educational experiences of minority, gifted high school students who attend urban high schools. The research design was a mixed methodology study using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative component consisted of a focus group in which minority, gifted students from a local public high school had a chance to discuss their experiences as both gifted and minority students. Themes that became apparent through these focus groups were then compiled and presented as a survey instrument that was distributed electronically to school counselors in the State of Ohio. The information acquired from this study will inform K-12 educators, educational policy makers, district administrators, and educational researchers with a better understanding of the experience of students who are both minority and gifted. In addition, the information from this study will broaden counselor education research on the topic of gifted students and specifically, the role that school counselors can play in the lives of the minority, gifted student and their educational experience.
3.2 Overview of Research Setting

Part one of the research study was conducted at Community High School (the name of the high school has been changed to protect the research participants). CHS is an urban high school in a large, capital city of a Midwestern state. At the time of the study, CHS housed grades 9 through 12; in the next 12-24 months, the district will be changing the grade levels that are present in CHS. According to the state department of education, during the 2005-2006 school year, the population of the school was 682 students. Approximately 94.2% of the students were African American students and 3.7% were white. 91% of students are labeled as “economically disadvantaged.” Even though CHS “met” it’s academic yearly progress and is labeled as “continuous improvement,” (which lies below excellent and effective, but above academic watch and academic emergency), the academic achievement of students is still of concern. While the state requires a 90% graduation rate, CHS had only a 56.9% after the 2004-2005 school year.

CHS was chosen because it is in close proximity to the large, state university where the study is being conducted and because of its reputation as one of the worst high schools in the city. As recently as April 2007, a shooting outside the school was reported on the local news station. Because of this reputation, it will be particularly enlightening to view the experiences of the minority gifted students who attend CHS. In addition, the large, state university runs a counseling and wellness center within CHS. Because of the counseling center’s existence for more than five years and the respect that school administrators have for the students and staff who run the center, the CHS administration was open to the idea of letting CHS students take part in this research study. It should
also be noted that the researcher had worked as a practicum student, intern student, and a supervisor at this counseling center, so the researcher was familiar with school, staff, and students.

Part two of this research study will be conducted via Internet using school counselors across Ohio that are members of the Ohio School Counseling Association. These participants and this procedure are discussed later in this chapter.

3.3 Research Questions

As reported in Chapter One, the following questions will be addressed during the research study at CHS:

1. What are the perceptions of minority, gifted students who do or do not participate in the gifted education program at their urban high school?

2. In the state of Ohio, how aware are currently employed secondary school counselors of the experience of the minority gifted student?

The remainder of this chapter explores how the study was conducted and what tools and resources were used to do so.

3.4 Research Study

This research was conducted as a mixed methodology study with both a qualitative and quantitative research component. Specifically, a sequential transformative strategy was utilized. According to Creswell (2003),

““The purpose of the sequential transformation strategy is to employ the methods that will best serve the theoretical experience of the researcher… by using two phases, a … researcher may be able to give voice to diverse perspectives [and] to
better advocate for participants……the transformative sequential strategy has two
distinct data collection phases, one following the other… either method may be
used first…” (p. 216).

The focus of this study was (1) to give voice to a group that is often unknown and
unheard and (2) to advocate for them within the school counseling profession so that as a
profession, school counselors begin meeting their needs.

In this study, the qualitative component of the study was conducted first at CHS. The quantitative component was then performed with a group of school counselors from across the State of Ohio. The next two sections will expand on both the participants and the data analysis piece of this study.

3.5 Qualitative Study

3.5.1 Qualitative Research Design

The qualitative component of the study used the constructivism paradigm and
specifically, grounded theory. Charmaz (2001) writes, “A grounded theory is durable
because it accounts for variation; it is flexible because researchers can modify their
emerging or established analyses as conditions change or further data are gathered” (p.
511). This is an appropriate choice for the study because flexibility is key when working
in a high school during the last full month of the school year.

For this stage of the study, a focus group was used in order to best collect and
analyze the perspectives of the student participants. According to Pollio, Graves, &
Arfken (2006),

“In general, focus groups consist of 4-10 participants who engage in a
conversation designed to discuss the complexities and subtleties of first-person experiences concerning some topic. In this context, participants emphasize things that stand out to them and build on one another’s comments to provide an overall picture of the phenomenon” (p. 259).

Two focus groups were conducted: focus group one had 8 student participants and focus group two had 7 student participants. Each focus group had less than 10 participants as recommended by Pollio et. al. (2006).

When a student chose to participate in the focus group, they filled out a biographical information sheet and chose a pseudonym. Each student had a pseudonym of their choice in order to protect their privacy. The focus group(s) occurred during the approximately one hour lunch period at CHS. Free lunch was provided to the students who chose to participate.

As the students ate the provided lunch, they answered a series of open-ended questions dealing with their experience as minority gifted students in school and with school personnel. The sessions were audio recorded so that they could be transcribed, coded, and studied for emergent themes. Pollio et al. (2006) write,

“"The final output of a focus group is thematic description. The transformation that leads from text to theme is not easy to describe, although it usually involves an ‘insight-like’ process that comes from a complete immersion in the interview text” (p. 261).

As noted above, the focus group is a key piece of the qualitative analysis process and needs to receive the utmost attention. Because of the difficulty of this
“transformation,” as described by Pollio et al. (2006), a research team was also used to aid the researcher with the interpretation. More specific details of the research team will be discussed below.

3.5.2 Qualitative Participant Selection

Multiple avenues were explored to find the students that have been identified as gifted and are considered a minority in the high school where the research study is being conducted. To select participants from CHS for the qualitative component of the study, a convenience sample was used. The researcher received a list of students from the district office for the gifted that listed all students at CHS who are identified as “gifted.” The researcher analyzed this list and checked it against student records to see which students are also labeled “minority.” Once this was determined, each of those students who met both criteria were approached by the researcher and invited to participate in the study. Any and all students in that group who choose to participate were included in the focus group. There was no compensation offered to the participants other than free lunch during each focus group.

Participation in this study was totally voluntary. Participants could leave the study at any time without being penalized in any way. If the student participant is 18 years of age, they received a recruitment letter about the research study and permission form to review and sign for themselves. For all student participants under 18 years of age, a recruitment letter, parental permission form, and student permission form were sent home for review and signature by their parent of legal guardian. Contact information for the
researcher was provided if there were additional questions or concerns that the parents, guardian, or student had regarding participation in the research study.

3.5.3 Qualitative Data Analysis

Research Team

In order to understand best interpret and understand the transcription of the focus group and evaluate it thoroughly, the researcher utilized a research team. A research team is made up on two to three individuals who assist the researcher in the coding process (which will be further described below). Two qualified individuals served as the research team on this study. These two individuals were not on-site during the focus group(s), but helped with the analysis of the transcription of the focus group session. Both team members are doctoral students who are trained in qualitative research. One is a first-year doctoral student and an African American female. The other is a third-year doctoral student and a Caucasian male. Both team members served as on-site supervisors at the university counseling center at CHS, as well as at other schools within the district. The research team met once to discuss the transcription of the focus group.

Coding

Coding is a key component of qualitative research and an essential part of this study. According to Charmaz (2001), “Coding helps us to gain a new perspective on our material and to focus further data collection, and may lead us in unforeseen directions” (p. 515). Once the focus group(s) were completed, the audio recording of each group was transcribed by the researcher. Next, the researcher evaluated the data and analyzed the data for prominent words, ideas, and themes that served as code. This is considered a
“grounded scheme” and will allow the voices of the students to serve as the actual code (Schwandt, 2001). After the researcher uses this method to initially evaluate the transcript(s) and create the code, the research team gathered to once again review the transcripts and individually open-code the specific sections of the document. This meeting of the research team allowed the themes to become evident and helped create the survey for the quantitative component of the study.

**Researcher Subjectivity & Worldview**

The researcher is a Caucasian woman who grew up in a traditional, middle-class family with both parents. She attended public school for grades K-12. For the most part, the described schools were suburban or Department of Defense schools (DODD) located on U.S. military installations and around the world. One exception was during her 6th grade year when she attended an urban school in El Paso, Texas. The researcher graduated from high school cum laude, received an undergraduate degree in history and political science, and a masters degree in school counseling. The researcher is a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education.

During her master’s degree studies, the researcher worked at CHS as both a practicum and an internship student. During part of her doctoral degree studies, the researcher was a school counseling supervisor to masters level school counseling students at CHS; she has also held this position at another urban high school in the same district in which CHS is located. The researcher was also a graduate assistant in the Office of Academic Affairs at the large state university where the study is being conducted.
The school counseling program in which the researcher attained her masters degree was focused on and dedicated to working with urban school districts. As a student in this program, the researcher immersed herself in learning about urban education and that cause became one that was close to her heart. The approximately 4 years of work in CHS and other schools in the urban district taught the researcher a great deal about working in an urban setting and the challenges these students face on a daily basis. In addition, it further committed her to working in these environments (versus an suburban or rural school district). Currently, the researcher works as Dean of Students at a local charter high school that educates students’ between the ages of 16 and 22. The researcher specifically chose this job because of her continued dedication to working with urban students who are not being well served by the educational system. The students at the charter high school that the researcher currently works with are quite similar to the students at CHS; not only does the researcher enjoy and feel challenged by working with this population, but her everyday experiences at school influence and deepen her understanding of her research study.

All of these familial, educational, and employment experiences have contributed to the worldview and the lens the researcher utilizes in her qualitative research. These experiences are especially pertinent when she works in a school setting in which the vast majority (94.2%) of students are African American, underprivileged, and live a life very different from hers. Can she, as a white, educated, middle-class female understand the experiences of these student participants? Janesick (2000) sums it all up by saying,
“There is no value-free or bias-free design” (p. 385) and Denzin and Lincoln (2000) wrote, "There is no single interpretive truth" (p. 23). The point is that regardless of her personal life experiences, the research is still able to conduct qualitative research and connect with her participants. While the researcher will never be able to “step into the shoes” of her student participants and experience their lives as they live them, by listening to their voices and looking for the themes in their educational experiences, she can better understand the intricacies of their lives and assist and educate other school personnel in their efforts to understand them.

With this in mind, it is also important to point out all of the things that the researcher does not know. As a white woman, she will never understand what it is like to be a minority student. As someone who comes from a middle-class family, she will never be able to understand what it means to come from poverty or to deal with poverty on an everyday basis. As someone who attended suburban schools the majority of her life, she does not know what it would be like to attend school in an urban district. These few statements are examples of all that the researcher does not know and shows that her knowledge is only partial. In qualitative research, it is important and necessary to acknowledge what is known about the research as well as what is unknown.

3.6 Quantitative Study

3.6.1 Quantitative Research Design

After identifying themes from the qualitative phase of the study, the researcher progressed to the quantitative phase of the study and created a survey for school
counselors. The survey outlines the experiences that minority gifted students provided during the focus group session. The survey was then distributed to school counselors across the state of Ohio using the Ohio School Counseling Association (OSCA) listserv. Because the listserv is not divided by grade level, the e-mail specified that the survey was for secondary school counselors. In addition, the e-mail encouraged members of the listserv to forward the e-mail to other colleagues in secondary schools.

What are the advantages of using an online survey? Granello and Wheaton (2004) speak to this issue, saying, “

“Online surveys have several important advantages over paper-and-pencil surveys that make them particularly attractive to researchers. These include reduced response time, lower cost, ease of data entry, flexibility of and control over format, advances in technology, recipient acceptance of the format, and the ability to obtain additional response-set information” (p. 388).

Once the online surveys were returned, the data will be analyzed using SPSS.

3.6.2 Quantitative Participant Selection

Once the qualitative component of the study was conducted and the research team labeled the main themes of the transcripts, a survey was created. The purpose of the survey was to determine if secondary school counselors in the state of Ohio are in touch with the needs and experiences of the minority gifted students in today’s schools. This segment of the study used voluntary response sampling.

Once created, the survey was distributed to a listserv of school counselors around the state of Ohio. Originally, a listserv that specifically served secondary school
counselors in Ohio was to be obtained by the Ohio Department of Education. Information and discussions with ODE revealed that the listserv was no longer in use. After speaking with multiple conversations with staff at ODE, it appeared that listservs were no longer maintained through this organization.

It was necessary to find another means of distributing the survey following the setback. The Ohio School Counseling Association maintains a listserv of school counselors in Ohio (osca@heidelberg.edu). This listserv is voluntary and not level specific (i.e. elementary or secondary), but appeared to be the best means of reaching licensed school counselors throughout the state of Ohio.

The Dillman method (Dillman, 2006) was used when distributing the survey. Five e-mails were sent to members of this listserv. The initial e-mail was introductory and discussed both the purpose of the survey and provided a timeline for when the survey would be distributed. The second e-mail sent the survey link from surveymonkey.com, which allowed participants to participate in the study. The third e-mail served as a reminder that the survey was still available online. The fourth e-mail was a final announcement asking listserv members to participate. Finally, a fifth e-mail was sent later as a final plea asking for participation.

Those participants who chose to respond to the survey filled out the necessary information on the surveymonkey.com website. After closing the survey, the researcher printed out each survey to analyze the data for conclusions. The surveys were coded and entered by hand into SPSS.
3.6.3 Quantitative Data Analysis

Survey Creation

The survey was created online with the assistance of Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com), a free website that assists individuals in creating, distributing, and analyzing surveys. Once the themes were compiled from the interview transcripts, the researcher created questions that would solicit responses from the school counselors that would provide insight. A variety of question types were used, including yes/no, true/false, Likert scale questions, and fill in the blank. In addition to questions about gifted and minority gifted students in their respective schools, the survey solicited demographic information relating to the respondents and their careers. A copy of the full survey can be found in Appendix G.

Statistical Analysis

Once the participants completed the surveys, the researcher entered all of the data into SPSS. Frequency and descriptive statistics were run for each question to gain a basic understanding of the response rate and views of the participants. In addition, logistic regression analysis and an independent sample t-test was conducted for additional analysis.

3.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the specifics of the methodology for this study. A mixed methodology study using sequential transformation strategy was used. The qualitative component of the study occurred first at CHS, a local urban high school, followed by the online survey distributed electronically to school counselors in the Ohio School District.
Counseling Association. Both the researcher and the research team then analyzed the data.

Chapter four will discuss the outcome of this mixed methodology research study and chapter five will conclude the discussion of the study.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the results from both the qualitative and quantitative component of this study. Both components of the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of minority, gifted students who do or do not participate in the gifted education program at their urban high school?

2. In the state of Ohio, how aware are currently employed school counselors of the experiences of the minority, gifted student?

Each component of the study will now be discussed and the results summarized.

4.2 Qualitative Study

The qualitative component of the study included students identified as minority and gifted who attended a local urban high school. This group was chosen specifically to address the issues outline one and two above. Initially, the district’s Office for Gifted and Talented provided a list of 164 students for the study. The list included all students at Community High School ( pseudonym) that had been identified as “gifted”. This number
is somewhat misleading, however, as it includes multiple students more than once, as they are gifted in more than one subject area. Looking over this list, the researcher removed all duplicates and all students in grade 12. Students in grade 12 were removed because the focus groups were conducted at the end of the school year and students that were ranked as “seniors” were either taking final exams or out of school participating in senior specific activities and unavailable for the study. Once these students were removed, it was necessary to look and see what students were still enrolled at Community High School. Ninety-seven fliers recruiting participants for the study were distributed to the remaining students labeled “minority” and “gifted.” These students consisted of 38 freshmen, 35 sophomores, and 24 juniors. The researcher delivered these fliers to each student’s classroom and placed sign-up sheets in the university-associated counseling center. The large state university where the researcher is attending graduate school runs the counseling center independent of Community High Schools’ full-time school counselors. The counseling center is a partnership between the university and the school district to provide extra academic, personal/social, and career counseling to students while also training school counseling students in a live school environment. In addition, its goals are to expand the ideals of the Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI) to currently employed school counselors (TSCI is discussed in chapters 1 and 2). Two sessions were conducted to coordinate with the two lunch periods held by Community High School. Approximately 12 students signed up for session one and 8 students for session two.
When each student signed up for the focus group, they received specific paperwork based on their age consistent with the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) Guidelines on Human Subjects. If the student was under the age of 18, they received a consent form that their parents or guardian needed to sign and an assent form that the student needed to sign. If the student was age 18 or over, they were able to sign their own consent form; an assent form was not necessary in these situations (see Appendix E for both documents). The researcher checked the age that students provided against school records to ensure that the students were able to provide consent for themselves.

On the day of the focus group, the researcher personally delivered passes to each of the students who had signed up for the focus groups. This pass was distributed in the students’ pre-lunch class to ensure that they would receive permission from CHS to attend the focus group. The researcher also purchased pizza, soda, and water for the study participants to enjoy while taking part in the focus group.

Of those students signed up for session one, eight students showed up and participated. Of those students signed up for session two, seven students showed up and participated. After the completion of both focus groups, the researcher found out that two of the students signed up for session two had not returned permission slips. Both students said that they handed in their permission slips to another individual that worked in the university counseling center, but this proved untrue and the permission slips were never found. In addition, when transcribing the tapes, the students did not identify themselves before they spoke, making it impossible for the researcher to differentiate between the two students who had not turned in permission slips and those that had. Therefore, in
following the established human subjects guidelines, the focus group results from session two were thrown out. Only the focus group conducted in session one will be included in the analyses and subsequent interpretation

4.2.1 Demographics of Participants

The focus group that was used for the study contained eight students. Table 4.1 illustrates the demographic information of each student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student #1</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student #2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student #3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student #4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student #5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student #6</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student #7</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student #8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 – Demographics of Focus Group Participants

4.2.2 Themes

Each focus group was recorded using a digital voice recorder. The data from the second focus group session was discarded, and the researcher used session one data for
the qualitative analyses. The researcher listened to session number one and transcribed the approximately 40 minutes of data. Once the data was transcribed, the researcher read the material, analyzed the results, and looked for themes using an open coding method.

The research team then met and reviewed the transcript. The two qualified individuals are both doctoral students and have been trained in qualitative research. One research team member is a first year doctoral student and an African American female. The other research team member is a third year doctoral student and a Caucasian male.

The researcher and the team members reviewed the transcript individually and then collectively as a team. The team then discussed their coding and what themes emerged throughout the transcripts. Seven themes were identified in the data and are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes Collected from Interview Transcription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students are unaware that they are gifted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students do not know what it means to be gifted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students are unfairly stereotyped because of the school they attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students are unaware of gifted opportunities available to them at their school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Middle school counselors have been helpful in their development, while high school counselors are negatively perceived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Role models, whether in the school or community, help students to strive for greatness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Motivated by future aspirations, participation in school activities (clubs, athletics)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.2 Themes Collected from Interview Transcripts*
In order to truly appreciate the perspectives of the students in the focus group and what they are experiencing, it is important to analyze each theme and use the students’ own words from the transcript to support the various themes.

*Students are unaware that they are gifted*

Many of the students who volunteered to participate in the focus groups at Community High School were unaware that they were identified as gifted by the city school system. Students were unaware when they received the recruitment information about the study and came prepared with many questions when they signed up. Even after receiving the appropriate paperwork and talking to the researcher about the study, the idea of being labeled as “gifted” still escaped many of these students.

When discussing their being identified as gifted and at what point students themselves felt knew they were gifted, one student commented, “We didn’t. I didn’t know.” This student was forward with their own lack of knowledge on their giftedness. In addition, they felt confident enough in the lack of knowledge about giftedness amongst their peers to begin their participation by stating, “we didn’t” in regards to giftedness.

Another student commented, “I don’t mind saying I was gifted, but I never knew I was gifted.” This self-analysis is consistent with the theme that the student was unaware that he or she was gifted, but it also is opposite of what is written in much of the literature regarding minority students identifying themselves as gifted. It is possible, however, that because the student lacked knowledge of what being gifted entailed, they could not truly state whether or not they felt comfortable telling others of their newfound status.
Another student commented, “… I never realized it, that I was, like <gifted>, until this group, so like, I’m still over here thinking like, what am I gifted in? ‘Cause I am over here, like, am I really gifted or what’s up?” In this quote, the student shows how truly surprised he/she was and how this realization still had him/her questioning how this new discovery actually affected them. In addition, the surprise of the situation led to him/her questioning whether or not they really were gifted.

*Students do not know what it means to be gifted*

Not only were students unaware that they were identified as gifted, but many did not know the definition of gifted. As mentioned in the chapter 1, the State of Ohio defines gifted the following way:

“**Gifted**’ means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of section 3324.03 of the revised code” (Education Commission of States, 2004)

In addition, the Ohio Department of Education identifies students as gifted in one or more of the following categories: 1) superior cognitive ability, 2) specific academic ability, 3) creative thinking ability, and 4) visual and performing arts (Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-15, 2000).

When asked to define “gifted,” the researcher received various answers from students consistent with the general definition, including “talented, “special,” “above average,”” and “someone that excels in a subject.” Other comments, however, made it
appear that students were unable to process the true meaning of the word. Some of the focus group participants even worried that being “gifted” carried a negative connotation. For example, one student recounted their memory of being told they were gifted: “At first I thought it was weird, like, at first I thought it was a bad thing… like I was special.” The student not only interpreted giftedness negatively, but also viewed the word “special” in an unfavorable way.

Why is this? The answer could be consistent with the research discussed in chapter two on minority gifted students social experiences and academic achievement (Butler, 2003, Ogbu, 2004). Overall, the students seemed to have a sense of what being gifted meant and could describe personal feelings and experiences associated with it, even if they were unable to clearly understand the definition.

*Students are unfairly stereotyped because of the school they attend*

The students who participated in the focus group felt that other people in the school, community, and beyond, could not view them as gifted because they attended Community High School. As noted in chapter three, Community High School was chosen because it has one of the worst reputations amongst the city high schools due to both academic and social factors. This reputation is reflected in this theme, and the student comments support this analysis.

One student commented, “… you tell them you go to <Community High School> and they don’t think there are any gifted people here.” This student discussed the perceptions of Community High School and how that negativity plays into the lack of acknowledgement that gifted students attend there. Another student said, “I went home
yesterday and I told my friend that I got accepted, that I am doing this gifted thing and she was like “Shut up, you go to <Community High School>.” This comment is based on the student choosing to sign up for this research study, as the “acceptance” the student is describing was receiving the invitation and choosing to participate. As displayed in the quote, simply being accepted excited the student! This excitement (in addition to the comment from the student’s friend) clearly demonstrates the lack of acknowledgment of giftedness that is occurring at Community High School. In both cases described above, while the student was open and willing enough to share their giftedness with a friend (contrary to much of what is written regarding minority student achievement), the student’s excitement was returned with a negative response.

_Students are unaware of gifted opportunities available to them at their school_

This theme ties in with the above discussion of students not knowing that they are gifted and not understanding what it means to be gifted. In addition to the feelings associated with the word “gifted,” students participating in the focus group were unable to identify specific activities that would be labeled as gifted programming. When asked to describe what gifted programming they participate in, many gave examples such as “Savesnet,” “Upward Bound,” and “Project Grad.” While all are voluntary programs that students may participate in, none are directly related to any sort of gifted programming. While Upward Bound and Project Grad do have an academic focus, Savesnet is an anti-violence group in the school.

According to the large urban school system where the study was conducted, the following gifted programs are available for high school students:
Advanced Placement—Classes are available in all high schools; test fees are covered. Teacher training is provided.

Post Secondary Enrollment Options—PSEO makes it possible for students to attend high school and college at the same time.

Essex School for the Gifted—A week long, academic camp for high school juniors selected statewide. <Large City System> is allotted seven nominations. Five students from CPS attended the Essex School in 2003.

Interscholastic Chess League—Most <city> high schools along with several other public, private, and parochial schools participate in this league. CPS players can “letter” in chess.

PSAT and ACT—Data from these tests help guide students toward rigorous course selection. The tests are used to select National Merit Scholars and National Achievement Scholars.

Kenyon Academic Plan (KAP)— KAP is provided by the Gifted and Talented Program in cooperation with Kenyon College <available at 6 of the district high schools>

Summer Institutes—These are available on Ohio College Campuses for grades 9-11. Scholarships are available.

(http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/gifted/levels.html)

While these programs are offered in Community High School, not one was mentioned by any of the student participants. This absence is an unfortunate realization because the majority of these programs are available to students beginning in grade 9; the focus group was conducted at the end of the school year, meaning that all students in the focus group were on the cusp of grades 10 and 11 and were unaware of these programs.

It can also be noted that outside of the KAP classes and the PSAT/ACT testing, the other activities offered are either after school or held during the summer. It is possible that these students are not participating because they are unaware, but also because it is not feasible for them to stay after school or go away during the summer. These questions
regarding knowledge and/or availability were not asked in this research study, but could and should be addressed in future research.

Middle school counselors have been helpful in their development, while high school counselors are negatively perceived

When asked about their interactions with school counselors, presently or in the past, the students had strong reactions. One student said, “Okay, let me tell you about our 9th grade counselor, okay, I don’t like her. I wouldn’t, I wouldn’t go to her for nothing. Hold on, I wouldn’t go to her for nothing. She is so rude.…” While this student did not provide specific examples as to why he/she disliked the school counselor beyond her being “rude,” the question obviously provoked a strong response. Another student discussed the same school counselor and described a specific experience:

“Okay, the principal from last year… he made my schedule, my um, I was in the 8th grade and he made my schedule. I was supposed to be in honors seminar, I was supposed to be in everything, college club and stuff, and like, all of sudden my schedule changed. So, I went in the summer, to go get my schedule changed and she said she was gonna change it and stuff and she didn’t change it. And she’s really rude. And, like, I went to her, she had to sign Upward Bound papers, I went to her, this lasted 2 weeks, I went to her and said ‘I need you to sign these papers, can you do it for me?’ and she was like ‘I’m busy right now, come back tomorrow, come back the next day…’” In this case, the student also called the school counselor “rude” and complained about her lack of helpfulness when it came to paperwork. In both situations, the comments appear to take a personal edge, as the students felt the counselor was “rude” and appeared unable to
connect with him/her. This analysis is consistent with research from West-Olatunju et al. (2006) in chapter two that discusses students “perceived lack of respect received in school settings” (p. 6). Grantham’s (2004) research article on “Rocky Jones” was also discussed in chapter two and could also be pertinent in analyzing what the students above said, considering that “affirmation of academic potential” could encourage students to participate in gifted programming (p. 214).

As the focus group continued, the students also discussed their middle school counselors; their comments on their experiences with middle school counselors were in sharp contrast to the comments regarding their high school counselors. One student began discussing his/her middle school counselor, saying:

“Yeah, I love her. I was in all this extra stuff, and she would like, call me down for lunch and we would do these little programs and stuff, we’d talk about like, ‘cause I was like writing grants and stuff for school, for us to get money for programs and stuff, that’s how, I think that’s how a school counselor should be.”

This student was able to identify specific factors that contributed to his/her positive feelings about their middle school counselor. Another student also discussed the influence of their middle school counselor:

“I think, my middle school counselor, she encouraged me to do more things, like, we would do everything. I was in student council, and everything. Everything we did made me want to do more when I come to high school and that’s why I’m like, in so many things now, because of what she did, in middle school and she
made sure I stayed out of trouble. She made sure everybody stayed out of trouble.”

This student highlighted the importance of the school counselor’s involvement in his/her life and how the school counselor affected them on many levels. Another student discussed the different between middle school and high school involvement:

“I was mad when I came to middle school, and I talked to my counselor, I mean high school and talked to my counselor. In middle school, I was in everything, student council, planning dances, writing grants, and I come to <Community High School> like I’m going to try, I’m gonna run for student council and she’s like, ‘there’s none here.’”

The student is dissatisfied with the difference between middle school and high school and the lack of activity and support he/she found at Community High School.

*Role models, whether in the school or community, help students to strive for greatness*

While students felt let down by school counselors and other individuals in their lives and communities, they made it clear that specific people in their lives served as role models and encouraged them to achieve. Multiple students mentioned family members as being strong motivational figures in their lives. One student in the group discussed their grandmother, saying

“My grandma, she is always there, to like, be my backbone, she’s always like, <students name here> you know you going problems with your mom, but I always have your back. My grandma always told me that I was going to be special, that I was gifted, stuff like that.”
Not only did the grandmother support this student’s personal life, but she also encouraged them in their academic pursuits by telling them they were gifted and special.

Another student discussed their parents and the strict way in which the parents approached school. The student said,

“Um, my parents are really strict about my grades. And, it’s like, it’s like, since they are strict on my grades, I’m strict, like, that’s how I was born, strict on my grades, and, whatever. I only got a “C” my whole life 3 times, on my report card. Never below that. And, and, and, like my grandparents, every time I talk to my grandpa, he always saying, “do what you want to do” I mean “keep on doing what you are doing and you can have anything that you want” and “you can do anything you want” and then like, I mean, that’s how it is with my family, they are always encouraging me.”

This student felt very supported by both their immediate and extended family in academics. Overall, the students seemed to agree that family expectations played a role in staying motivated. When discussing parents and other family members, one student commented, “You don’t feel like you want to let them down.” This attitude seemed to be a consistent theme with the students who were interviewed.

Another student discussed another adult who assisted them, saying:

“Mr. <name here> he, um, he’s um, he’s a football coach and like, my Dad is a football coach, so I cannot get in trouble. The thing is, he helps me a lot, gives me advice and stuff, and and he tells me, like, if I feel like I am about to do something wrong, he tells me because it’s not going to help nobody at all.”
In this situation, the student discussed a non-family member that serves as a positive role model and mentor in the students life. In addition to immediate and extended family members acting as motivators in the lives of these students, teachers, administrators, supervisors at work, family friends, and pastors or other religious personnel all served as other sources of inspiration to these students.

_Students are motivated by future aspirations, participation in school activities (clubs, athletics)_

In addition to finding motivation to achieve and succeed through specific individuals and role models in their lives who inspire and support them, students in the focus group were also encouraged by participation in extracurricular activities. One student commented,

“We have a new drill team coach, and the way that she is about to start helping me make my grades is if I don’t have a certain GPA, I don’t pass my inspection, and if I don’t pass my inspection, I don’t perform on the field. In this situation, the student stayed motivated academically by their position in an extracurricular activity and the indirect expectation of their couch. Another student in a similar situation mentioned participating in football and stated “It’s like football and stuff. Football, first you got have a certain GPA.”

In addition to extracurricular activities, students also appeared to be motivated by future endeavors, such as college. One student said:

“Like, I’m looking for colleges right now, I already started. Like, my parents already told me you, you um, you’ve got to… my mom says you better know
what you are doing right now so that you don’t become a senior that doesn’t know what you are doing and then you are stuck. Um, so, like, now, I’ve been looking for colleges and stuff, I know what I want to do when I get older…”

4.3 Quantitative Study

After conducting the qualitative aspect of the study, the themes that emerged were used to create a survey for school counselors to address the remaining question: In the State of Ohio, how aware are currently employed school counselors of the experiences of the minority gifted student?

4.3.1 Demographics of Participants

58 individuals responded to the survey, though not all completed the survey in full. Please reference Appendix H for a complete table of demographic information.

78.9% of the survey respondents are female and 21.1% are male. When asked to identify their ethnicity, 89.5% of respondents self-identified as Caucasian, while 7.9% identified as other, and 2.6% preferred not to answer. The ages of the respondents ranged from 26 years old to 64 years old with a mean age of approximately 43 years old.

Regarding their educational background, 81.6% of respondents were teachers before they became school counselors, while 18.4% were not. 57.9% of respondents have a master’s degree, 34.2% have a master’s degree plus additional graduate hours, and 7.9% have a Ph.D. Of the 38 respondents that chose to answer this question, their years school counseling experience ranged from 1 year or less to 32 years; the mean was approximately 9 years. While approximately 92.1% of respondents had taken a
multicultural counseling class, only 55.3% of respondents took a special education class that included information on gifted students.

The survey also analyzed the kind of educational settings in which these school counselors worked. 13.2% of respondents worked in an urban school, 39.5% in suburban, 39.5% in rural, and 7.9% classified their schools as “other.” When looking at the grade levels in each school building, the majority of school counselors (63.2%) worked schools that housed grades 9-12. 5.3% worked in a K-12 setting, 5.3% worked in a 7-12 setting, 2.6% worked in a 10-12 setting, and 23.7% classified their setting as “other.” To view the frequency and descriptive tables for this information, please consult the appendix.

4.3.2 Statistical Computation

In order to best address the research question mentioned above, various statistical methods could be used. For this study, the researcher utilized SPSS to compute the data for the 58 respondents. The data from surveymonkey.com was downloaded into two Microsoft Excel data files; one file was a summary of each question and one file was for each individual case number with their individual responses. In addition, the researcher reviewed and analyzed each survey by hand. Data from all 58 respondents was entered into SPSS once each survey was reviewed. This data set was then used to run various statistical tests. For a general overview, descriptive and frequency statistics and various statistical tables are shown and discusses below. For a more in-depth analysis, an independent sample t-test was used, as well as logistic regression analysis. All procedures are discussed in detail below.
4.3.3 Results

**Gifted Program**

The survey asked basic questions about gifted programming in the school building where each school counselor worked (see Appendix G for full survey). When asked whether or not their school had a gifted program, of the 42 respondents that chose to answer this question, 56.4% stated that their school had a gifted program, while 43.6% stated that their school does not have a gifted program. When asked what educators within their school building were the most involved with the gifted program, 37.7% said teachers, 35.8% said an unnamed individual, 18.9% said a combination of school personnel, 3.8% said the school counselor, 1.9% said the school psychologist, and 1.9% said school administrators.

![Figure 4.1 – Educator Involvement in Gifted Programming](image)

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School counselor participants also responded regarding how their district identifies gifted students. 35.2% chose standardized testing, 1.9% chose teacher recommendation, 38.9% chose all of the above (which includes parent request in addition to these other factors), 16.7% chose a combination of factors, and 7.4% chose none.

![Figure 4.2 – How District Identifies Students](image)

**Counselor Involvement**

It is important to review the level of school counselor involvement with gifted students and, more specifically, with minority, gifted students. To perform this analysis, the survey asked multiple questions about school gifted programs and the school
counselors’ level of involvement with their gifted programs. When asked to describe their involvement with gifted students, not one respondent chose “very involved.” 16.4% of respondents chose “somewhat involved,” 41.8% chose “rarely involved” and 41.8% chose no involvement.

Figure 4.3 – School Counselors Involvement

When asked to describe their understanding of their school district’s gifted identification policy, 34.3% of respondents chose “completely,” while 45.7% said they understood the process “somewhat” and 20.0% said they did not understand the process at all. When asked to describe the tests that districts use in the identification process, 33.3% of respondents said they are “completely” aware, while 50% said they knew “somewhat” aware and 16.7% said they did not understand at all. Finally, when asked to
describe their involvement in the districts identification process, 7.3% said they were “completely” involved, 36.6% said they were somewhat involved, and 56.1% said they were “not at all” involved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Completely</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Not At All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand my school districts</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gifted identification process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what tests are used in the</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identification process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am involved in my districts gifted</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identification process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 – School Counselors Level of Involvement

Minority Representation

The school counselor participants were asked four specific questions relating to their view of gifted, minority students and their experiences in working with these students. The first two questions specifically addressed minority representation in schools. When asked if minority students were adequately represented in their schools’ gifted program, 54.8% said yes, while 45.2% said no. When asked whether minority students were adequately represented in gifted programs in the United States, 23.8% answered yes and 76.2% answered no.

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Figure 4.4 – Feelings on Minority Representation in their School

Figure 4.5 – Feelings on Minority Representation in the US
Comparison of Experiences

For the next two questions, participants were asked to use a Likert scale and choose strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The school counselor respondents were first asked if they felt the experience of minority gifted students is different from that of non-minority gifted students at their school; 28.6% strongly disagreed, 42.9% disagreed, 23.8% agreed, and 4.8% strongly agreed. When asked this same question in regards to the United States as a whole, 3.4% strongly disagreed, 24.1% disagreed, 41.4% agreed, and 3.4% strongly agreed.

Figure 4.6 – Opinion on Experience of Minority Gifted in their School
Five questions on the survey specifically referenced the concerns that students expressed during the focus group session. School counselor respondents were asked to answer true or false to each statement. When presented with the statement “It is important for gifted students to know that they are gifted,” 58.6% of respondents answered true, while 12.1% answered false. When presented with the statement, “School counselors should help gifted students become aware of gifted programming at their school,” 67.2% of respondents answered true, while 3.4% answered false. When asked, “It is important for
students to understand what it means to be gifted,” 63.8% of respondents answered true, while 6.9% answered false. The next statement presented to the school counselors was “Role models within the school and/or the community are crucial to the success of gifted students.” When presented with this statement, 69% of respondents answered true, while 1.7% answered false. Finally, when given the statement, “Gifted students do not need additional attention from the school counselor,” 8.6% of respondents answered true, while 62.1% answered false.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>False</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important for gifted students to know that they are gifted</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School counselors should help gifted students become aware of gifted programming at their school</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important for students to understand what it means to be gifted,</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role models within the school and/or the community are crucial to the success of gifted students</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifted students do not need additional attention from the school counselor</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.4 – Responses to Survey Questions 12 through 16*
Comparison of Means

To more thoroughly analyze the data, the researcher conducted an independent sample t-test. Understand (I understand my school districts gifted identification process), testing (I know what tests are used in the identification process), and involvedproc (I am involved in my districts identification process) were used as testing variables. Each testing variable was scaled as such: 1 = Completely, 2 = Somewhat, and 3 = Not at all. The dummy variable created for involvement (Involv1) was used as the grouping variable. The results are shown in table 4.5 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Involv1</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand my school districts gifted identification process</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>.726</td>
<td>.726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>.598</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what tests are used in the identification process</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td>.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>.590</td>
<td>.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am involved in my districts gifted identification process</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>.588</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.637</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 – Independent Sample T-Test Results

The independent sample t-test shows the relationship between an individuals level of involvement (0 = involved, 1 = not involved) with the variables described above. As
table 4.5 shows, those individuals who had a higher involvement \((M = 2.29, \ SD = .726)\) had a statistically significant higher understanding of the their school districts gifted identification process. Those individuals who had higher involvement \((M = 2.13, \ SD = .743)\) had a statistically significant higher level of knowledge about what tests are used in the identification process. Finally, while not statistically significant, table 4.5 shows that those individuals who had a higher level of involvement are more involved in their districts gifted identification process.

**Regression Analysis**

For further analysis and understanding of the school counselor participants answers, the researcher chose to use logistic regression analysis to analyze the responses and how they may be related. Logistic regression was chosen because the dependent variable that was to be used \((CounsInv)\) is a nominal variable.

The researcher first looked at question number four on the school counselor survey, which inquires “How would you define your involvement with your schools gifted program?” Each respondent could choose one of the following responses: (1) Very Involved, (2) Somewhat Involved, (3) Rarely Involved, or (4) None. As discussed above 0% of respondents chose very involved, 16.9% chose somewhat involved, 41.8% chose rarely involved and 41.8% chose no involvement. Because question four is written into the survey as a nominal variable, it is necessary to create dummy variables to transform it to a scale variable to be used in a regression model. For this question, the four involvement categories were condensed into two categories, involved and not involvement, and created under the dummy variable “Involv1.”
Once the dummy variables were created for level of involvement (Involv1), a logistic regression analysis was run using the variables minrepschool (Do you feel that minority students are adequately represented in your school’s gifted program?) and minrepusa (Do you feel that minority students are adequately represented in gifted programs in the United States?).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables in the Equation</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1 a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MinRepSchool(1)</td>
<td>1.522</td>
<td>.806</td>
<td>3.570</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>4.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MinRepUSA(1)</td>
<td>-.357</td>
<td>.954</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.708</td>
<td>.700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.318</td>
<td>.465</td>
<td>.470</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.493</td>
<td>.727</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: MinRepSchool, MinRepUSA.

Figure 4.8 – Logistic Regression #1

After running the analysis, figure 4.8 shows that minrepschool was marginally significant at .059. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that an individual’s feeling on minority student representation in gifted programming in the participants individual school may contribute to their level of involvement with gifted programming. It is not possible to support the hypothesis that an individual’s feeling on minority student representation in gifted programming in the United States contributes to their level of involvement with their schools gifted program.

The logistic regression analysis was run once again using level of involvement (Involv1), but this time, using the variables age (What is your age?) and schoolcounsynears (How long have you been a school counselor?) as the independent variables.
The analysis demonstrated no significance (see Figure 4.9). Therefore, it is not possible to support the hypothesis that a school counselor's age or the number of years that they have been working in the profession contribute to their involvement in their schools' gifted programming.

A third logistic regression analysis was run using level of involvement (Involv1) with specialed (Have you taken a special education class that included information on gifted students?) and multicultural (Have you taken a multicultural counseling class?) as the independent variables (see Figure 4.10 below).

### Figure 4.9 – Logistic Regression #2

![Variables in the Equation](table1.png)

### Figure 4.10 – Logistic Regression #3

![Variables in the Equation](table2.png)
There are three *SpecialEd* variables listed because this categorical variable had three response choices (1=yes, 2=no, 3=other). Once again, the analysis showed no significance. Therefore, none of the independent variables are significant and the hypothesis that a school counselor’s level of involvement in their schools gifted programming is affected by the taking of a special education or multicultural counseling class is unsupported.

Finally, a fourth logistic regression analysis was run using level of involvement (*Involv1*) with the variable *teacher1st* (“Before you were a school counselor, were you a teacher?”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables in the Equation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.11 – Logistic Regression #4

The analysis showed that having previously been a teacher was not significant (see figure 4.11). Therefore, the hypothesis that a school counselor’s participation in their schools gifted programming is affected by whether or not they were a teacher first is not supported.

In summary, none of the logistic regression analyses conducted provided a significant independent variable. Thus, all four hypotheses were rejected, and the researcher was unable to support that any of the following issues affected an individual’s...
participation in gifted programming: views on minority representation, age, years as a school counselor, taking a special education or multicultural counseling class, and being a teacher before becoming a school counselor.

Final Thoughts

Those who completed the survey also had the ability to leave a “final thought” on the experience of minority, gifted students who attended their school. While few answered these questions, those who did were very insightful.

Some of the responses provided an unfortunate view of the attitude of school counselors in the state of Ohio. For example, a 34-year-old woman who worked in a rural school that was grades 7 through 12 wrote the following: “We have only 5 minority students in our building. We are a rural white school. The 5 students who are black are foster placement students.” Another 26-year-old white female who worked in a rural school for grades 9 through 12 disagreed with the fact that gifted minority students are treated differently than non-minority gifted students, both in the United States and in her individual school. She wrote, “There seems to be no difference in experience, however, our minority population is very small... from my experience, it doesn’t to be too drastic in a difference (sic).” A 31-year-old white female who works in a rural school made up of grades 9 through 12 wrote, “We do not have any minority gifted students in our school.”

While the honesty of the respondents was appreciated, these answers were disheartening due to the apparent lack of worldview and multicultural awareness.

Other individuals did not specifically comment on minority gifted students, but
did state that they did not think this problem existed in their school. A 49-year-old white female who works in a rural building with grades 8 through 12 wrote, “We do not have a gifted program at our high school. All students take the appropriate courses based on their abilities. PSEO is always available for those students wanting to go beyond our curriculum.” Another individual who chose not to share any demographic information strongly disagreed with the fact that minority gifted students are underrepresented in the United States and in their school and wrote, “It’s the same experience based on current qualifications and criteria.” Interestingly enough, this individual also wrote that they are rarely involved in their school’s gifted program and only somewhat understands the school district’s identification process, tests used in the identification process, and whether or not they are involved in the districts identification process.

Not all “final thoughts,” however, were negative. A 27-year-old female who works in a rural building housing grades 9 through 12 wrote:

“We have a small minority population, but I would assume our representation in the gifted program/identification are not equally distributed across our total school population…. I’m afraid our gifted program/identification process is far from up to par and I hope to discover more as the school year continues.”

A 45-year-old white female who works in a rural building housing grades 9 through 12 wrote, “I believe most of our minority students have different experiences than the majority. This is a very small community that is predominantly white. There needs to be more diversity awareness among staff and students.” A 64-year-old white male who
works in a suburban building that houses grades 9 through 12 wrote the following:

“They are any student, adolescent gifted minority students need to start looking for colleges and scholarships and summer enrichment activities sooner in their educational experience, but we counselors have to be aware of specific resources these students can tap into that are not generally known to these students. It is about making connections and have a relationship in which such connections can grow to help students.”

A male counselor who preferred not to reveal his age or race that works in a suburban building with grades 9 through 12 wrote,

“Yes, on a basis of the majority of my colleagues lack a sound knowledge and skill base in the area of cultural diversity... Again, I believe that there are too many individuals that do not have the knowledge and skill base to effectively and positively work with various cultures.”

4.4 Conclusion

The data from the qualitative and quantitative elements of the study provided a great deal of information on both the experiences of minority gifted students and how school counselors view these and other gifted students. This chapter summarized each section of the study and the results. Chapter five will draw conclusions, provide limitation, and look at implications for future research studies.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Summary

This chapter provides a conclusion and final analysis to the research study that has been discussed in the first four chapters. To address the two main research questions, a qualitative and a quantitative study were conducted. The qualitative study consisted of a focus group of eight high school students who were labeled as gifted, identified as minority, and attended one of the major urban high schools in the city. The focus group produced numerous themes that were then utilized to create a survey. The survey was then distributed to a listserve of school counselors provided by the Ohio School Counseling Association. The survey solicited information on the school counselors’ involvement with gifted programming, views on gifted students, and specifically, gifted minority students, and general information about each counselor’s school, education, and other background.

This chapter draws conclusions based on the research conducted, provides implications and recommendations, discusses the limitations of the study, and concludes with final thoughts.
5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 What are the perceptions of minority, gifted students who do or do not participate in the gifted education program at their urban high school?

To address this question, the researcher conducted a focus group with minority, gifted students at Community High School. While it was hypothesized that gifted services at this school and other urban high schools were lacking, the results were still surprising. The major themes of the focus group were: 1) Students are unaware that they are gifted, 2) Students do not know what it means to be gifted, 3) Students are unfairly stereotyped because of the school they attend, 4) Students are unaware of gifted opportunities at their present school, 5) Middle school counselors have been helpful in their development, while high school counselors are negatively perceived, 6) Role models, whether in the school or community, help students to strive for greatness, 7) Students are motivated by future aspirations, participation in school activities (clubs, athletics).

While the themes gleaned from this focus group are important and can influence future research, the voices of the students was the most significant piece. The researcher was both touched and saddened by the level of excitement displayed by the students who chose to sign up for the focus group. Just partaking in this group made so many of them feel “special,” a feeling with which they were unfamiliar. The most surprising was how many of them did not know they were gifted and when they found out, worried that it was something negative.

In a competitive society that constantly pushes achievement, how are these
students expected to succeed without the appropriate tools? The lack of implementation of the gifted programming is just one element, both academic and societal, of what is missing for these students at CHS. The focus group showed that students lacked a relationship with their high school counselor. This relationship could be crucial to many of these students, and yet, they do not seek assistance out or refuse to return to the counselor for help because of a negative experience.

Even in this environment of negativity, many of these students are resilient and still finding ways to succeed. They shouldn’t, however, have to do it on their own. Without support at school, many of them have nothing.

5.2.2 In the State of Ohio, how aware are currently employed secondary school counselors of the experiences of the minority, gifted student?

This was a difficult question to adequately and effectively answer with 58 respondents. The outcomes of the survey questions provoked many emotions: surprise, disappointment, sadness, and hope.

When asked questions about minority representation in their individual school and in the United States overall, 45.2% of respondents felt that minority students were not appropriately represented in their school and 76.2% felt that they were not properly represented in the US. An interesting phenomenon emerged in that these school counselor participants seemed to hold their school in higher regard than other schools in the US. While 54.8% of individuals felt that minority gifted students were appropriately represented in their school, only 23.8% felt that minority gifted student were
appropriately represented in schools across the US. The same phenomenon was evident with the school counselor participants when questioned regarding the experience of minority gifted students in the participant’s school versus in the US overall. While only 23% agreed that the experience of minority gifted students at their school was different than that of non-minority gifted students, 57.1% agreed to this on the national level. It would appear that many of these school counselors are aware of the issues facing minority gifted students, but that they are not willing to admit that these things happen at their school.

When looking at the school counselor’s level of involvement with gifted programming and their level of understanding of gifted programming, the results were fairly disappointing. The fact that no one chose that they were “very involved” was worrisome. While having a number of individuals say that they were “very involved” would have been surprising, not even having one person (an outlier!) stating their involvement with gifted programming was “very involved” was disappointing. The level of understanding was also lacking. Even if school counselors are not participating in any of the gifted programming in their school, they must be familiar with it. As an advocate for all students, how can the school counselor help those exceptional children reach their potential if they are not familiar with the process, what it means, and how it works? Overall, it would seem that the school counselors are not in contact with the gifted program enough to really comprehend the experiences of their student.
5.3 Implications and Recommendations

There are many lessons that could and should be gleaned from this research study. First, it is necessary for every school to have a well-organized, well-publicized gifted program of which students are aware and to which they have access. There must be a reputable, regulated, and documented program in every school district. This program must be multifaceted and not be solely dependent on standardized testing. As reflected in the literature (Ford, 1996), being solely dependent on standardized testing does not often take into account minority students.

While not all students will qualify for gifted programming, it is necessary to have a formalized application process of which all school officials are aware. With this system in place, students should be appropriately reviewed and informed of their “identity” and how that positive determination affects their academic decisions. Implementation of the programs is vital; having a program that is not utilized is akin to having no program at all.

Next, school counselors must be aware and informed of the gifted program and, specifically, the identification process for selecting students. As advocates for all students, school counselors are in an ideal position; they must understand the system so that they can recommend students, help these students make appropriate academic choices, and provide guidance with the personal/social issues that accompany being identified as gifted. As shown in this study, this assistance would be especially helpful for those minority gifted students who experience a multitude of issues both when they are overlooked as gifted and once they are identified.
Next, it is absolutely necessary for all school counselors in the State of Ohio (and across the country, for that matter), to take multicultural counseling classes. Regardless of the size, location, or kind of school (urban, suburban, or rural), these classes would be vitally helpful for school counselors and could help to eliminate the lack of cultural understanding that is evident in some of the survey responses (i.e. “We have only 5 minority students in our building. We are a rural white school. The 5 students who are black are foster placement students”). If anything, multicultural classes could open school counselors’ eyes to their own prejudices and misunderstandings as they provide assistance to all students.

In addition to multicultural counseling classes, special education classes that feature instruction on gifted students should also be required. School counselors are responsible for assisting ALL students with academic, personal/social, and career issues. With a wide range of students in special education, it is absolutely crucial for the school counselor to be an active figure in all of these processes. A special education class would not only better inform school counselors and allow them to better understand the individual students with which they are dealing, but also identify the current weaknesses and inequalities of the system. In this position, school counselors should act as advocates for students going through the special education identification process. This assistance could be helpful in many ways, but most importantly to ensure that minority students are not being overidentified for special education and underidentified for gifted education.
5.4 Limitations

As with any research study, limitations were present in this study. One limitation of this study was the possibility of social acquiescence in both the focus group and the online survey. In the focus group, students could feed off of each other and say what they thought their fellow classmates or the researcher wanted to hear. While the online survey was completed individually and anonymously, those individuals who chose to complete it might have chosen the answer they thought was the most socially acceptable or that the researcher wanted to hear, instead of the answer they truly believed.

Another limitation of the study was the selection effect that occurred from using the online survey instrument during the quantitative segment of the study. Because the survey went out only to the Ohio School Counseling Association listserve, the only individuals who had the opportunity to respond were members of the listserve or those who had the e-mail forwarded to them. In addition, survey responses were totally voluntary. In this situation, individuals can choose whether or not they complete the survey; often times, those who choose to complete the survey have strong feelings on the matter and those who do not choose not to do it. Therefore, it is always important to keep this in mind when interpreting the statistics and thinking about generalizability.

5.5 Future Research

While this small study provided valuable insight into the current perceptions of minority gifted students who attend urban high schools, as well as the secondary school counselors across the State of Ohio, there is more to be done. There are multiple ways to enhance the study with future research. First, interviewing additional students and school
counselors could add depth to the study. The student focus groups could be conducted in multiple or all high schools in the urban district used as the setting for this study. To further generalize, the researcher could also talk to students in the eight major urban districts in Ohio: Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Youngstown (www.ohio8.org, 2005).

While school counselors across the State of Ohio were solicited through the Ohio School Counseling Association listserv, the voluntary response rate was less than ideal (as described above in limitations). If the student focus groups were expanded across the state, a targeted list of secondary school counselors from each school in the major eight urban districts could be acquired and utilized. To take the study even further, school counselors in the United States could be solicited through the American School Counseling Association and asked to participate. These expansions could help broaden the research to be gained and analysis to be completed.

Another aspect of the research that warrants more study is the issue of race and gender. In this study, the minority students interviewed were overwhelmingly black and women; there was one male student and one Asian student. How did this affect the perceptions of the students? Would the outcome have been different if there were more male/female diversity and more racial diversity amongst the minority students? Future research should replicate the study with a more diverse student population to further study the same phenomenon.

Finally, based on the theme that developed regarding middle school counselors (Middle school counselors have been helpful in their development, while high school
counselors are negatively perceived), it would be interesting to conduct this study and look exclusively at a population of middle school counselors working in school settings that house grades 6 through 8.

5.6 Conclusion

According to Zora Neal Hurston, “Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose” (Hurston & Wall, 1997, p. 43). The purpose of this study was to research a population of students (minority gifted students) that are not being given the opportunities to reach their academic potential. The study also evaluated school counselors, their levels of awareness, and how their thoughts and feelings affected their everyday interactions with students.

While one can read countless books and articles regarding the plight of the minority student in education and every once in a while, the minority gifted student in education, it is rare to deeply review and fully appreciate these students' experiences. The “formalized curiosity” in this case came from the researcher working in multiple urban high schools and rarely hearing about gifted programming, even though the district has its own gifted education office. With this knowledge, the researcher set out to find minority gifted students, listen to their experiences, review the involvement of the school counselor in their lives, and determine how the students and school counselors can all work better together.

Hopefully, this research study will be a small step in the right direction and will allow other researchers to continually research these problems and determine how they can be improved. In the grand scheme of things, it is important to remember that at the
core of this issue, there are wonderful students who are missing their chances. They are unaware of their abilities, lacking in opportunities, and even told, “you ain’t gonna be nothing, you’re gonna be at McDonalds flipping burgers.” It is vital to stop this unequal treatment of minority gifted students and provide them with the myriad opportunities of any other student showing exceptional ability. It is a simple request with a long and complicated path to success, but one that must be attempted.
Dissertation References


Columbus Public Schools (2000) Policy and plan for the identification of children who are gifted. District Office for Gifted Education.


Frasier, M. M. (1989) Poor and minority students can be gifted, too! *Educational Leadership, 46*(6), 16-18.


Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2006) [www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com).


APPENDIX A

LETTER FROM OFFICE OF OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT
April 18, 2007

Dr. Sandi Bronner
Columbus Public Schools
270 East State Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Sandi,

Enclosed is a copy of a research proposal, "Gifted Education," which is submitted by one of our graduate students, Julie Nelson in the School of Physical Education and Educational Services. Julie would like to conduct her study at High School.

After reviewing this proposal, please notify me as soon as possible if your district would like to participate. Our researchers are aware that the results of their studies are to be shared with your district. If additional information is needed, please feel free to contact Julie at 202-5891. Participation in this project will earn 3 fee waiver hours for your school district.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Don Cramer, Director
Office of Outreach and Engagement

End.
cc: file
APPENDIX B

RESEARCH APPROVAL FROM SCHOOL DISTRICT
May 15, 2007

Don Cramer
The Ohio State University
College of Education
10 Arts Hall
1845 North High Street
Columbus, OH 43210-1172

Dear Mr. Cramer,

The Research Proposal Review Committee of Columbus Public Schools has reviewed and approved the research proposal of Unknown & unheard: The experiences of the minority, gifted students in urban high schools, by Julie Nelson.

I am enclosing a letter of introduction. The letter of introduction should be given to the researcher so that she may offer it to administrators when soliciting participation/subjects for the study. The researcher must get the permission of the building principal or designee, get their signed consent (see letter of introduction), and fax it to the Department of Educational Services, Columbus Public Schools at 365-5183, before contacting any potential subjects in that building. If the researcher plans to conduct research in more than one building, the letter may be reproduced in order to get signed consent from all building administrators involved.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact my office.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Saundra G. Brennan, Ed.D.
Director, Evaluation Services
APPENDIX C

SCHOOL DISTRICT LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
May 22, 2007

Dear Administrator:

This letter serves as an introduction to Ms. Julie Nelson, doctoral candidate from Ohio State University. Ms. Nelson's proposed research: Unknown & unheard: The experiences of the minority, gifted students in urban high schools has been reviewed and approved by the Research Proposal Review Committee.

This letter does not obligate you to participate in the study. Rather, it is an introduction and official notification that Ms. Nelson followed established procedures and has been granted permission to solicit subjects to participate in the study.

If you agree to allow this researcher to conduct research in your building, please sign below. The researcher must then fax this letter to the Department of Evaluation Services at 385-5180. This must be completed before the researcher contacts any potential subjects in your building. If you have any questions or concerns, please call my office.

Sincerely,

Audra G. Brennan, Ed.D.
Director, Evaluation Services

Signature

The Columbus City School District does not discriminate because of race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, or handicap with regard to admission, access, treatment or employment. It also is applicable to all district programs and activities.
APPENDIX D

IRB APPROVAL

IRB AMENDMENT APPROVAL
May 29, 2007

Protocol Number: 109788
Protocol Title: UNKNOWN AND UNHEARD: THE EXPERIENCES OF THE MINORITY, GIFTED STUDENT IN URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS
Christopher Wood, Julie Nelson, Physical Activity and Educational Services
Type of Review: Initial—expedited
IRB Staff Contact: Kelly Copes
Phone: 614-292-1026
Email: cyan17@cfa.ohio-state.edu

Dear Dr. Wood,

The Behavioral IRB Approved by Expedited Review the above referenced protocol. The Board was able to provide expedited approval under 45 CFR 46.111(b)(1) because the research project involves risks to subjects and qualifies under the expedited review category listed below.

Date of IRB Approval: May 14, 2007
Date of IRB Approved Expiration: May 21, 2008
Expeditied Review Category:

In addition, the protocol has been approved for the inclusion of children (per mission of IRB protocol). Any applicable informed consent form and/or data collection procedure must be obtained from subjects or their legally authorized representatives and documented prior to research involvement. The IRB-approved consent form and procedures must be used.Congress has identified clinical research (e.g., enrollment procedures, advertisements, consent procedures) or informed consent process must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented (except where necessary to eliminate physical, psychological, or emotional harm to subjects).

This approval is valid for one year from the date of IRB review when approval is granted or modifications are required. The approval will no longer be in effect if the above listed above as the IRB expiration date. A Continuing Review Application must by approved within this interval to avoid suspension of IRB-approved and ongoing all research activities. A formal report must be provided in the IRB and all records relating to the research (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit at least 3 years after the research has ended.

It is the responsibility of the investigator to promptly report to the IRB any actions, events, and any adverse events or potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This approval is granted under the Ohio State University's OHSR Federal Assurance 000363721.

All forms and procedures can be found on the IRB website—www.oehr.osu.edu. Please feel free to contact the IRB staff about the above with any questions or concerns.

Sue R. Spear, PhD, Chair
Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board.

[Signature]

May 29, 2007
Version 1/2/05
September 28, 2007

Protocol Number: 2007B1106
Protocol Title: "I NEVER KNEW I WAS GIFTED...", THE EXPERIENCES OF THE MINORITY, GIFTED STUDENT IN URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS, Christopher Woods, Julie Nelson, PAES

Type of Review: Amendment - Expanding
Approval Date: September 27, 2007
IRB Staff Contact: Kelli Cyrus
Phone: 614-292-9226
Email: cyrus.172@osu.edu

Dear Dr. Woods

The Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB APPROVED the above referenced protocol.

Note that if unreliable. Informed consent (and HIPAA research authorization) must obtained for subjects or their legally authorized representatives and documented prior to research involvement. The IRB-approved consent format must be used. Changes in the research (e.g., procedures, participants, confidential numbers, etc.) or informed consent process must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented (except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects).

It is the responsibility of the investigator to promptly report to the IRB any serious, unexpected and related adverse events or potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This approval is issued under the Ohio State University's IRB Federalwide Assurance #00006378.

All forms and procedures can be found on the OHIP website www.osu.edu. Please feel free to contact the IRB staff contact listed above with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Shari E. Sparse, Ph.D., Chair
Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board
APPENDIX E

HUMAN SUBJECTS – PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

HUMAN SUBJECTS – CONSENT FORM

HUMAN SUBJECTS – ASSENT FORM
The Ohio State University Parental Permission
For Child’s Participation in Research

Study Title: Unknown & Unheard: The experiences of the minority,
gifted students in urban high schools.

Researcher: Dr. Chris Wood/ Ms. Julie Nelson

Sponsor:

This is a parental permission form for research participation. It contains important
information about this study and what to expect if you permit your child to participate.

Your child’s participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to discuss the study with your friends and
family and to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to permit your child
to participate. If you permit your child to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and
will receive a copy of the form.

Purpose:

To explore the educational experience of minority students who are identified as gifted and to
find out what their motive is for participating or not participating in gifted education
programming.

Procedures/Tasks:

Your student will be asked to participate in one to two focus groups at a
These focus groups will occur during lunchtime and lunch will be provided for your
student. The group will discuss their experience(s) as minority students who are also gifted.
The session will be audio taped. Your student will be identified only by a pseudonym of their
choice. The researcher will also have access to your student’s cumulative record. This
information will eventually be part of the researcher’s dissertation and one copy will be
distributed to the Franse Nolan, director of gifted education for Columbus Public Schools.

Duration:

1-2 hours (1 hour per focus group)
Your child may leave the study at any time. If you or your child decides to stop participation in the study, there will be no penalty and neither you nor your child will lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University.

Risks and Benefits:
There are no identifiable risks to your child from this study at this time. If something occurred during the process that was of concern to the you, your child, or the researcher, you will be contacted.

Confidentiality:

Efforts will be made to keep your child's study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your child's participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law. Also, your child's records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):

- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or institutional regulatory agencies;
- The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices;
- The sponsor, if any, or agency (including the Food and Drug Administration for FDA-regulated research) supporting the study.

Incentives:
Lunch will be provided during each of the focus groups, free of charge to your student.

Participant Rights:

You or your child may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you or your child is a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you and your child choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights your child may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.
Contacts and Questions:
For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Ms. Julie Nelson at (614) xxx-xxxx.

For questions about your child’s rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6281.

If your child is injured as a result of participating in this study or for questions about a study-related injury, you may contact Ms. Julie Nelson at (614) xxx-xxxx.

Signing the parental permission form
I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to provide permission for my child to participate in a research study and have their cumulative record accessed. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to permit my child to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

Printed name of subject

Printed name of parent authorized to provide permission for subject

Signature of parent authorized to provide permission for subject

Date and time

Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

Printed name of person obtaining consent

Signature of person obtaining consent

Date and time

Form date: 12/19/06

Page 3 of 3
The Ohio State University Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: Unknown & Unheard: The experiences of gifted, minority students in urban high schools
Researcher: Dr. Christopher T. Wood/Julia Nelson

Sponsor:

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate.

Your participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

Purpose:
To explore the educational experience of minority students who are identified as gifted and to find out what these students have to say about their participation or not participating in gifted education programming.

Procedures/Tasks:
You will be asked to participate in one to two focus groups. These focus groups will occur during lunchtime and lunch will be provided for your student. The group will discuss their experiences as minority students who are also gifted. The session will be audio taped. You will be identified by a pseudonym of your choice.

Duration:
1-2 hours (1 hour per focus group)

You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University.

Risks and Benefits:
There are no identifiable risks to your child from this study at this time. If something occurred during the process that was of concern to the you, your child, or the researcher, you will be contacted.
Confidentiality:

Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law. Also, your records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):
- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies;
- The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices;
- The sponsor, if any, or agency (including the Food and Drug Administration) for [FDARegarded research] supporting the study.

Incentives:
Lunch will be provided to you free of charge during each of the focus groups.

Participant Rights:

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

An institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Contacts and Questions:
For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Julie Nelson at (614) XXX-XXXX.

For questions about your rights as a participant in the study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-5251.

If you are injured as a result of participating in this study or for questions about a study-related injury, you may contact ________________.
CONSENT
Behavioral/Social Science

IRB Protocol Number
IRB Approval date:
Version:

Signing the consent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

[Fields for printed name of subject, signature of subject, date and time, etc.]

Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

[Fields for printed name of person obtaining consent, signature of person obtaining consent, date and time, etc.]

Page 3 of 3  Form date: 12/15/05

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The Ohio State University Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: Unknown & Unheard: The experiences of gifted, minority students in urban high schools

Researchers: Dr. Christopher T. Wood/Julie Nelson

Sponsor:

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate.

Your participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

Purpose:
To explore the educational experience of minority students who are identified as gifted and to find out what their motive is for participating or not participating in gifted education programming.

Procedures/Tasks:
You will be asked to participate in one to two focus groups at [specify location]. These focus groups will occur during lunchtime and lunch will be provided for your student. The group will discuss their experiences as minority students who are also gifted. The session will be audio taped. You will be identified by a pseudonym of your choice. In addition, the researcher will have the ability to look at your cumulative record. This information will eventually be part of a dissertation written by Ms. Nelson for her doctorate degree at Ohio State. When finished, this dissertation will be given to Frances Nolan, head of gifted education for Columbus Public Schools. None of your identifiable information (name, address, etc.) will be included in this paper.

Duration:
1-2 hours (1 hour per focus group)

You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University.
Risks and Benefits:
There are no identifiable risks to your child from this study at this time. If something occurred during the process that was of concern to you, your child, or the researcher, you will be contacted.

Confidentiality:
Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law. Also, your records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):
- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies;
- The Ohio State University Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices;
- The sponsor, if any, or agency (including the Food and Drug Administration for FDA-regulated research) supporting the study.

Incentives:
Lunch will be provided to you free of charge during each of the focus groups.

Participant Rights:
You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Contacts and Questions:
For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact Ms. Julie Nelson at (614) xxx-xxxx.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.
CONSENT
Behavioral/Social Science

If you are injured as a result of participating in this study or for questions about a study-related injury, you may contact Ms. Julie Nelson at (614) xxx-xxxx. Signing the consent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study and have my cumulative record accessed. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

Printed name of subject

Signature of subject

Date and time

Printed name of person authorizing consent for subject (if applicable)

Signature of person authorizing consent for subject (if applicable)

Relationship to the subject

Date and time

INVESTIGATOR/RESEARCH STAFF

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no thanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

Printed name of person obtaining consent

Signature of person obtaining consent

Date and time

Page 3 of 3
Form date: 12/15/05
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APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL
Focus Group Protocol for Minority Gifted Students

PART I

1. Define "gifted."

2. At what point did you know you were "gifted"?

3. At what point did school personnel tell you that you were identified as "gifted."

4. Describe your feelings about being "gifted."

5. Do you participate in gifted activities at this high school?
   a. If YES...
      i. Why?
      ii. What benefits do you see to participation in gifted programming?
      iii. Are there drawbacks to your participation in gifted programming?
   b. If NO...
      i. Why?
      ii. What benefits do you see to not participating in gifted programming?
iii. Are there drawbacks to your lack of participation in gifted programming?

6. Does your race/ethnicity...
   a. Affect your feelings on the label “gifted?”
   b. Affect how others treat you (both those of your own race/ethnicity and those who are not)?

**PART 2**

1. Tell me about the individuals in your life who help you make decisions.
   a. Who are they?
   b. What is their role?
   c. Why is their advice valuable?

2. What individual(s) here at school help you make important decisions?
   a. Who are they?
   b. What is your relationship with them?
   c. How do they help you?

3. What would you like to tell people about “gifted” students who happen to be a racial or ethnic minority?
PART 3

1. Tell me about your experience(s) with...
   a. Your current school counselor(s)
   b. Past school counselor(s)

2. How have school counselors (past and present) influenced...
   a. Your overall school experience?
   b. Your gifted education experience?

3. Currently, what role does the school counselor play in your life?

4. Currently, does your school counselor assist you with participation in gifted programming?

5. In the past, have school counselor(s) assisted you with participation in gifted programming?
APPENDIX G

SURVEY FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS
The purpose of this survey is to collect data on secondary school counselors' interactions with minority gifted students.
1. Does your school have a gifted program?
   - Yes
   - No
   Other (please specify)

2. How does your district identify gifted students?
   - Standardized Testing
   - Teacher Recommendation
   - Parent Request
   - All of the Above
   - None of the Above
   Other (please specify)

3. What is the name of your gifted program? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC!

4. How would you define your involvement with your school's gifted program?
   - Very Involved
   - Somewhat Involved
   - Rarely Involved
   - No Involved
   Please explain your answer below.

5. What educators within your school are most involved with the gifted program?
   - Teacher
   - Administrator
   - School Counselor
   - School Psychologist
   - School Social Worker
   - Other (please specify)
5. Do you feel that minority students are adequately represented in your school's gifted program?
   
   ◯ Yes
   ◯ No
   ◯ Other (please specify)

   * 7. Do you feel that minority students are adequately represented in gifted programs in the United States?
   
   ◯ Yes
   ◯ No
   ◯ Other (please specify)

   * 9. On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 4 being "strongly agree," do you feel that the experience of gifted minority students is different than gifted non-minority students AT YOUR SCHOOL?
   
   ◯ 1: Strongly Disagree
   ◯ 2: Disagree
   ◯ 3: Agree
   ◯ 4: Strongly Agree

   * 9. Please explain your answer to the above question.
   
   * 10. On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 4 being "strongly agree," do you feel that the experience of gifted minority students is different than gifted non-minority students IN THE UNITED STATES?
   
   ◯ 1: Strongly Disagree
   ◯ 2: Disagree
   ◯ 3: Agree
   ◯ 4: Strongly Agree

   * 11. Please explain your answer to the above question.
* 12. It is important for gifted students to know that they are gifted.
   - True
   - False

* 13. School counselors should help gifted students become aware of gifted programming at their school.
   - True
   - False

* 14. It is important for students to understand what it means to be gifted.
   - True
   - False

* 15. Role models within the school and/or the community are crucial to the success of gifted students.
   - True
   - False

* 16. Gifted students do not need additional attention from the school counselor.
   - True
   - False

17. Please choose one answer for each question below.

   - I understand my school district's gifted identification process.
     - Completely
     - Somewhat
     - Not at All

   - I know what tests are used in the identification process.
     - Completely
     - Somewhat
     - Not at All

   - I am involved in the district identification process.
     - Completely
     - Somewhat
     - Not at All
16. Please choose one answer for each question.

- There are many opportunities for minority gifted students at my school: True  
- Minority gifted students at my school are aware of the opportunities available to them: True  
- Teachers are supportive of minority gifted students at my school: True  
- School counselors are supportive of minority gifted students at my school: True  
- Administrators are supportive of minority gifted students at my school: True  

19. If you have any final thoughts regarding minority gifted students and their experience in your school, please type them below.

[Space for typing]
* 20. Please tell me some information about your school.
   Is your school considered urban, suburban, or rural?
   What grades are included in your school?
   What is the population of your school?
   How many school counselors (including yourself) are employed in your school?

* 21. Please tell me about your education and career.
   What is the highest level of education you pursued?
   How long have you been a school counselor?
   Before you were a school counselor, were you a teacher?
   If yes, what subject?
   Have you taken a special education class that included information on gifted students?
   Have you taken a multicultural courses.

22. Please tell me about you.
   Do you identify yourself as male or female?
   What is your age?
   What is your ethnicity?
Thank you for participating in this survey.
Your responses have been recorded electronically.
APPENDIX H

SCHOOL COUNSELOR PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS
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This is my 14th year.

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**CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION:**

**ALL DEMOGRAPHICS REPRESENTED**

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**Master's plus some additional hours**

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**Master's plus some additional hours**

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**Master's plus some additional hours**

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**Master's plus some additional hours**

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**Master's plus some additional hours**

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