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The Academic Self-Perception and Performance of the Gifted
Female High School Student

Yvette Avery Gittens

THE ACADEMIC SELF-PERCEPTION AND
PERFORMANCE OF THE GIFTED FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

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THE ACADEMIC SELF-PERCEPTION AND
PERFORMANCE OF THE GIFTED FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

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ABSTRACT

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Barry University, 2012

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Purpose

This study examined the academic self-perception and performance of gifted female students in high school using a mixed methods explanatory sequential design. Challenged to succeed academically, gifted female students must also fulfill social expectations of society. The adolescent female values the need to belong, which adversely affects self-perception and intelligence quotient scores. The study investigated how self-perception impacts the academic performance of gifted female students in high school.

Method

Through purposeful sampling, forty female students from the 2010-2011 Gifted Program in a Miami, Florida public senior high school were profiled using the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA). From the participant pool, a smaller representative sample was selected of students from multiple grades and varied groups (ethnicities) for a follow-up interview on the nine domains of self-perception. The SPPA profile data was first analyzed using the means and standard deviations on the SPPA to identify and examine significant domains.

Major Findings

Results of the profile indicated significant, high competence domains in the gifted female student were “scholastic competence” and “global self worth.” A two-way factorial ANOVA was then conducted to analyze the patterns and trends of the domain scores and the possible factors of grade level, group (ethnicity), or age to determine if any of these affect the domain scores. The two-way factorial ANOVA revealed that the grade level, age, or group (ethnicity) of the gifted female student was not significant for scholastic competence. The two-way factorial ANOVA indicated the grade of a gifted female student is significant for global self-worth competence, although age and group (ethnicity) are not significant for global self-worth. The second phase of the research took the findings from the initial SPPA profile analysis to inform the qualitative component of the study. Nine gifted female high school students consented to participate in the follow-up interview phase of the study. Transcripts of the semi-structured interviews were examined to further explain areas of dominance. The interviews revealed the contributors, contributions, and impact of significant domains on the Academic Performance of the participants. In the final phase, the researcher mixed the findings generated by the two methods of data collection, the results of the SPPA and the findings of the interviews. The interview responses confirmed and further explained the results attained from phase one of the study with “scholastic competence” emerging as a high competence area and “physical appearance” as a low competence area. The mixed methods design ensured inference quality with the accuracy of the research between the two data sources. The findings give voice to the gifted female by informing curricular

decisions, practices, and policy in gifted programs. Furthermore, the study adds to the body of knowledge about gifted females and may assist in the furtherance of the social and academic development of the gifted high school female.

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I acknowledge My Lord and Savior. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

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DEDICATION

To Ashley, Danielle, and Moriah,

My greatest encouragement

Thank you, girls, for always valuing my gifts and talents.

Thank you, Robert.

You remind me that I can do great things.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Through this study, the researcher explored the academic self-perception and performance of gifted adolescent females who are impacted by educational opportunities and the educational environment. Such exploration assisted the researcher to determine if a significant relationship exists between self-perception and performance in the development of the academic performance of females in our society. Research has supported the positive influence of self-concept on academic achievement (Pajares & Schunk, 2001). One of the primary goals of education is the development of the academic competence of students. According to Bandura (1986), in the educational environment, “Educational practices should be gauged not only by the skills and knowledge they impart for present use but also by what they do to [students'] beliefs about their capabilities, which affects how they approach the future. Students develop a strong sense of self efficacy, are well equipped to educate themselves when they have to rely on their own initiative” (p. 417). Gender research initiated by Leta Stetter Hollingworth (1926) continues to challenge educational systems that fail to consider gender-specific traits and tendencies of females in order to provide a supportive academic environment that both develops and nurtures females. Additionally, the gifted female encounters not only gender bias or stereotypes in her educational encounters but may also encounter the societal restraints that compel her to choose from among, marriage, motherhood, career, and passion.

Because of such limitations and societal restraints, the gifted female student may not become a gifted woman. The destructive combination of sex role stereotyping (Sadker & Sadker, 1994), low self-esteem (Noble, 1989b), and an overarching fear of success contribute to limited aspirations and the consequent achievement (Reis & Callahan, 1989). The gifted label can stigmatize both sexes as they attempt to interact and fit in with age level peers (Cross, Coleman & Stewart, 1993; Gross, 1989). The gifted female encounters additional barriers, such as classroom interactions, preparation for advanced course offerings, high stakes testing, or teacher expectations of intelligence as well as the school environment due to gender bias inequities in the classroom.

Background of the Problem

Education for the gifted has been included in Florida State law since 1968 under Florida's Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Program. According to the administrative rule in the State of Florida, the definition of the gifted student is "One who has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance" (Special Programs, 1977, p. 1). This Florida definition was adapted after Marland, U.S. Commissioner of Education, wrote (1972) the federal definition. The Florida rule defined the criteria for gifted placement to include an intelligence quotient of two standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence, a majority of the characteristics associated with gifted children according to a standard scale or checklist, and a need for a special program (Special Programs, 1977). In 1988, the U.S. Congress passed the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

(ESEA) (Elementary & Secondary Education Subpart 6-Gifted and Talented Students .SEC. 5461, 1988). “This act provided \$8 million for the identification and services of gifted students, the professional development, curriculum, and training of teachers, and the creation of a National Center for the Education of the Gifted” (Heward, 1996, p. 33).

Despite the opportunity made available through legislation and state funding, the educational system continues to fail to meet the needs of gifted females as local, state, and national levels (Sadker, Sadker, & Zittleman, 2009). In 1992, the research study by The American Association of University Women Educational Foundation (AAUW) entitled “How Schools Shortchange Girls” (Bailey, 1992) commissioned by Wellesley College provided a comprehensive report on the status of females. The study challenged the educational system and brought to the forefront educational policies that continue to stifle the development of girls. The study noted that girls and boys in elementary school come into school with equal ability, but in twelve years of school girls fall behind their male classmates in higher-level mathematics, sciences, and self-esteem (Bailey, 1992). The AAUW study documented that classroom activities appeal to boys' interests more than girls', even in presentation styles. Throughout the research, teachers socialize girls toward femininity. Girls are rewarded for being neat, quiet, and calm, while boys are encouraged to think independently, speak up, and be active. This process begins early in the life of a girl where being popular is more important, while than academic performance and capability are less significant. "Girls in grades six and seven rate being popular and well-liked as more important than being perceived as competent or independent. Boys, on the other hand, are more likely to rank independence and

competence as more important " (Bailey, as cited in Chapman, 1995 para. 4). Instruction in the class may be the reason girls' grades drop from elementary school through higher education. Female students receive less classroom instruction in quality and quantity of teacher time and attention (Sadker, Sadker, and Zittleman, 2009). Gender socialization of girls can explain some of the reasons why girls do well in school. Girls are awarded higher report card grades, become valedictorians, and go on to college, but the purpose of school still can remain unclear for girls (Sadker, Sadker, and Zittleman, 2009).

According to Sadker, Sadker, and Zittleman (2009), girls' self-confidence plummets from the elementary years to adolescence due to gender socialization. School plays a pivotal role in creating a challenge and a change in gender role expectations that inflict and undercut the achievement and self-confidence of girls. Gender bias continues to be a prevalent problem in our schools (Sadker, Sadker & Zittleman, 2009). The education of the gifted female has a history of underachievement, sex role stereotyping, and gender bias (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). The lack of gender equity continues to be a national concern that sabotages the future lives of girls.

Statement of Problem

According to Reis (1998), historically, the education of gifted females has failed to diminish the barriers to achievement or foster the self-perception of girls. Talented females' beliefs in their abilities and feelings of self-confidence are diminished and undermined during childhood, first by their parents (Reis, 1998) and then by teachers (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Gifted female students all but disappear in high school as they deliberately underachieve in academics and minimize their talent in order to be socially

accepted (Fox, 1981; Silverman, 1993). The more gifted female students are systematically stymied by teachers, counselors, and parents the more easily the external factors of limiting stereotypes and barriers to achievement presented by parents, school, and the larger society can be perpetuated (Reis, 2001). As gifted females progress through the educational system, they tend to disappear due to gender biased definitions of giftedness. The progressive loss of giftedness, a result of socialization practices of imposed upon females, undermines female self-confidence and aspirations (Silverman, 1993). Olshen and Matthews (1987) aptly identified the discrepancy between giftedness in school achievement and talent development as the “disappearance of giftedness in girls.” “Too many gifted girls, ebullient, confident, and filled with high aspirations, simply and quietly disappear” (Klein & Zehms, 1996, p. 30). The underachievement of gifted females does not end in high school, which is measurable by school grades, but continues to be prevalent in adult women of college age and older. According to Reis (1987), underachievement in adult women is determined by what a gifted woman believes she can attain or accomplish in life.

Bell (1989) discovered that gifted females often perceive achievement and affiliation as contradictory issues. From a girls’ view competition means someone wins and someone loses. Dickens' (1990) study of parental influence on math self-concept in gifted female adolescents reported consistently significant correlations between parental expectations and student math achievement. Even though there is literature about the barriers to achievement and the impact achievement has in upon girls school, the research, however, conducted has not solicited the participation of gifted female students

by identifying significant areas of self-perception nor has it allowed them to share their personal stories as students. The self-perceptions of gifted female student participants in the study will guide what can be done to enhance gifted females' educational experiences and gifted curriculum development.

This study provides insight into the gifted female, not as a male alternative, but as a female with gifted talents and abilities unique on her own. Gifted females' perceptions and their needs can be translated through the lived experiences of the gifted female, and can provide valuable information that can assist in mentoring gifted females, providing educational programming for them, and developing their academic confidence. The implications for this research has the potential to affect how gifted and talented females are educated; provide a new direction in the professional development of educators of gifted females; and help policymakers make sound decisions regarding the long term development of talented women.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the study is to investigate the significant areas of self-perception in gifted high school female students and how the results of self-perception domains may explain the academic performance of the gifted female. The goal of the study is to inform curricular decisions, examine the significant areas of self-perception domains of the gifted female student, and recommend additional and alternative curriculum and instructional approaches to better service the gifted female students in educational programs thereby developing and nurturing their long term academic achievement. The findings of the study should be of interest to school districts and educators to provide

better access to educational programming and equity in educational contexts and practices for the gifted female students by developing their self-perception and academic performance.

Through the implementation of a sequential explanatory mixed methods research design, the study used the quantitative results of the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988) and qualitative data gathered through interviews with gifted female students. The data collected are both related and connected. Analysis of quantitative data derived from the SPPA informed and directed the interviews. The data analysis provided the significant self- perception domains and directed the questions posed in the interview phase. Respectively, the interviews helped to explain the results of the SPPA. The data collected served to build on one another (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) and merged to provide the final, comprehensive results. The study conducted took place at a public high school in Miami-Dade County which has a diverse gifted population. The results of the study can only be generalizable to students similar to those in the study. The study would have to be replicated at other school sites in varied socioeconomic settings to extend the findings more broadly.

Research Questions

This research study addressed the following four questions:

1. What specific domains of self-perception are significant in the gifted female high school student?
2. What patterns and trends emerge regarding domain scores, of the possible factors to include grade level, ethnicity, or age, in the gifted female high school student?

3. How have the significant domains of self-perception most impacted the academic performance of the gifted female high school student?
4. In what ways do the interview responses explain the SPPA results of the gifted female high school student?

Theoretical Framework

Critical theory served as the framework for the study to disempower the constraints of gender and to empower the gifted female. The researcher acknowledged the participants' roles and the multiple perspectives of the topic made available through the reality of the participants. The realities of the gifted female high school student are included and documented by the actual words of the participants. These multiple realities gave voice to central themes explored and studied to interpret the social institution of school.

The study was examined through a feminist lens. Feminist research centers around women's issues within the social institutions that surround them. Feminist thought holds that "all women are oppressed" (Hooks, 1999, p. 5). Therefore, sexism becomes an oppressive energy in the individual lives of women. According to Hooks, "Sexism as a system of domination is institutionalized, but it has never determined in an absolute way the fate of all women in this society" (p. 5). Capitalism allows for the patriarchal structure of sexism to restrict the behavior of women in some realms, while permitting freedom from limitations in other areas. As a result, women ignore the areas of discrimination and may believe, in fact, that women are not oppressed at all (Hooks, 1999).

Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) informs the examination of the social institution that surrounds women, and emphasizes behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions observed, then modeled. Human behavior is “. . . learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action" (p. 22). The social learning theory views human behavior as a continuous mutual interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences.

In the literature, the gifted female is defined using terms associated with her male counterpart. Using this type of framework to interpret the gifted female only exacerbates the problem of understanding the gifted female. The goal in feminist research is to confirm collaborative and non-exploitative relationships (Olesen, 2005). Bandura's social learning theory permitted the researcher to examine the modeled behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions perpetuated in the social institution, the school, and classroom, that can influence the academic performance and self-perception of the gifted female. Through this framework the focus of the research questions directed the collection of data in order to address the feminist purpose of the critical theory.

Significance of the Study

As the research has identified (Reis, 1987), the gifted female is a special population in gifted education in need of assistance and services. The cultural underachievement of gifted females has become a known fact resulting from varied factors such as sex role stereotyping and gender bias. The lack of personal achievement in girls and women and their sustainability as eminent women negatively impacts

females' both personal and societal levels. To examine the context of the gifted female, the researcher must establish an understanding of the construction of gender in society so as to align the equality of the gifted female to intervene with the oppressive cultural practices in the school and classroom environment (McInnes, 1994). Feminist practices recognize the shared experiences of females to oppose domination (Adair, 1992). It is therefore necessary to have the shared views from the profile results and the interviews of the gifted females in order to give voice to the gifted female in informing curricular decisions and practices in gifted programs. Additional consideration will examine and elucidate the form of gender bias, inequitable educational practices, and the causes of the oppression of the gifted female in the social institution to add to the body of knowledge about gifted females and ultimately to foster change in the social order (Scraton, 1992). This proposed study provided an opportunity to examine, through a feminist lens, the gifted female in the high school years of her development in order to make recommendations to curriculum developers and to impact future policies in gifted programs that may assist in the furtherance of social and academic growth in young women while preparing for self-efficacy over her lifetime. The results of the research serve the educational community in many facets from informing gifted programming to designing professional development for teachers of the gifted. The research findings may assist in the counseling of and program development for the high school gifted female students.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms and definitions are used throughout the study. The researcher has defined the terms by identifying the presently accepted definition, or at times, the widely accepted definition in the research.

Acceleration. Acceleration practices adjust the pace of instruction to match students' abilities, provide students with the appropriate level of challenge, and reduce the time needed for students to complete traditional schooling (National Association for Gifted Children, 2004). Acceleration serves as “. . . an intervention that moves students through an educational program at rates faster, or at younger ages, than typical. It means matching the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum to the readiness and motivation of the student” (Colangelo et al., 2004, p. *xi*). The most common forms of acceleration in the senior high grades include: grade skipping, moving ahead in one subject area (single-subject acceleration), Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate studies, dual enrollment, and early entrance into college.

Cultural Ecological Theory. Cultural Ecological Theory centers on three major concerns: how the group was incorporated into the American society, fair or equitable treatment of mainstream culture to the group, and the group's adaptation or reaction to the mainstream society (Ogbu, 1978).

Enrichment. Enrichment is designed to afford both breadth and depth in the curriculum, and to challenge and build development in the area of the student's giftedness (Schiever and Maker, 2003). Enrichment can come in the form of advanced learning

opportunities, programs or services intended to address one or more of the following: foster interest, nurture talent or expertise, and/or increase achievement (Roberts, 2005).

Gifted. Academically gifted, those learners whose tested intelligence quotients are within the superior range and who perform exceptionally in academic areas and are generally two or more grade levels ahead of their typical peers in achievement. One who has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance requires special educational services in order to make appropriate educational progress (Marland, 1972).

Gifted female. Gifted female has been identified as a special population in gifted education due to “the number of men recognized as gifted, creative or talented in our society far exceeds the number of women who have achieved the same level of success” (Callahan, 1979, p. 401). Gifted females are subjected to underachievement, sex role stereotyping, gender bias, and cultural stereotypes; requires appropriate identification, program planning, and intervention strategies for the development of their unique needs and abilities (Robinson, 2002).

Gifted programming. The appropriate curriculum and instructional strategies employed to provide a rigorous, high quality educational experience that is considerate of and distinctive to the gifted learner. Programming should ready the gifted learner and transverse the student to the next level of educational challenge, which is grounded in self-learning and social learning (Van Tassel-Baska, 2004).

Identity. Identity in adolescence is central and can be viewed in light of personal identity constructs and social identity constructs. Personal identity is the individual personality, the unique way in which a person defines self (Olson, 2008). Personal

identities include self-concept/self-esteem, intelligence, personality, motivation, volition/self-regulation, and self-efficacy. Social identity is the group to which the individual belongs or the group with whom the individual identifies. Social identity can include racial/ ethnic group, first language, gender, nationality, or community of origin, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status (Worrell, 2008).

Personal identity. Personal identity, such as academic self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation, has a strong relationship with academic achievement (Lepper & Henderlong, 2000; Schunk & Pajares, 2002). The role of social identity constructs on academic achievement can further be explained by the cultural ecological theory and the stereotype threat (Ogbu, 1978; Steele, 2003). Both views engage the relationship of personal identity and social identity.

Self-concept. Self-concept defined as a person's self-perception created through experiences with and interpretations of the environment (Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton Model, 1976). Self-concept is the individual's awareness of "the internal organization of external roles of conduct" (Hormuth, 1990, p. 2). The global or composite self-concept consists of both academic self-concept and nonacademic self-concept. Academic self-concept includes the different academic areas. Nonacademic self-concept comprised social self-concept, emotional self-concept, and physical self-concept (Shavelson, et.al., 1976). Self-concept is formed by both external comparisons and internal comparisons, comparisons with others and comparisons with self. The set of attitudes that form the self-concept are relatively stable (Strein, 1993; Piers 1996).

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the individuals' beliefs in individual abilities and their abilities to effect change: setting goals, organizing self and required resources to accomplish the task. Efficacy is not the assessment of one's skills but more the degree to which individuals assesses their success in achieving the completion of a task (Navan, 2009). The individual evaluation of a person's personal abilities is required in order to achieve a task or goal (Bandura, 1986).

Self-perception. Self-perception is the self-awareness of one's characteristics, and self-knowledge. Self-perception can be examined in the individual behavior of a person more so than in what a person feels about him- or herself. People can have different perceptions of themselves in specific domains, such as physical, social, and work, due to the multidimensionality of self-perception (Harter, 1985; Marsh & Shavelson, 1985). In the physical domain, perceptions of an individual are considered factors in determining levels of global self-worth (Fox, 1992). Recent studies of this construct have resulted in the development of multidimensional physical self-concept scales.

Sex role stereotyping. Sex role stereotyping is the process in which a gender is assigned certain roles or behaviors (Reid & Stephens, 1985).

Stereotype Threat. Stereotype Threat refers to the underachievement by stigmatized groups as the result of societal stereotypes of individuals and groups. Societal stereotypes can have a devastating impact on academic performance in particular situations where the stereotype is most salient. The phenomenon can occur on various educational levels from elementary to college (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1998).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review encompasses in the view of major theorist the evolution of current gifted identification mechanisms, current conceptions of giftedness, as a basis for the study and the identity development of the gifted female (Gilligan, 1982). These foundations allow the researcher to understand the characteristics of the gifted female and the necessary learning environment, curriculum, and instruction required to develop the gifted female's social and emotional development that in turn affects her self-perception for future achievement.

Gifted Identification

Historically, giftedness in the United States is shaped around themes that continue to determine the direction of gifted education in the twentieth century. The four influential figures included in this section have both similar yet distinct approaches to giftedness.

Intelligent Quotient (IQ) Identification

Lewis Terman believed intelligence was a vital constant, an "original endowment" that is neither changed nor altered by education or diligent work. Thus, he termed the intelligence as "intelligence quotient." Terman's longitudinal cognitive study of 1500 children and adolescents in cognitive psychology in 1920 identified high functioning individuals using the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale. The study had a two-fold purpose: to find the traits that characterize children of high IQ, and consequently to follow the subjects as long as possible to observe them as adults (Terman, 1925).

Terman's ultimate goal of his study was to set the elite intelligence apart from the rest of the population in hopes of perpetuating his belief of eugenics. Eugenics is a movement centered on the selective breeding of humans to perpetuate the best characteristics to make a stronger and better breed of humans. The founding fathers of intelligence testing believed testing would be the best means to achieve the eugenics purpose.

The Terman Study of Genius identified students first by teacher nominations, and then followed by intelligence testing in California school districts. Terman's released book *The Measurement of Intelligence*, served a threefold purpose: instruction manual, IQ test, and manifesto for universal testing. The intelligence test, which takes a child only 50 minutes to complete, revolutionized what students learned and how they thought of themselves. Terman's study established a cutoff of 140 IQ criterion, the top one percent of the population, and followed the participants from adolescence into adulthood (Terman & Oden, 1959). Early tests identified people who scored on the bottom end of the scale as being retarded, while others were considered to be genius as on the higher end of the scale. Terman concluded that children with 140 IQ or higher are healthier, better adjusted, and were academically higher achievers than other students. Intelligence testing from a critical theorist's perspective is therefore a way to oppress the individual student, and the group, as well as society by self-imposed or externally imposed social influences. Additionally, Terman's research contradicted earlier beliefs which expected giftedness and neuroses in high IQ children. Terman's test provided U.S. educators the first, simple, inexpensive, and quick "objective" way of tracking students in order to assign course sequences according to students' innate ability.

Leta Stetter Hollingworth, a psychologist working in the New York City schools in 1917, researched 31 case histories of children with IQs of 180 and their academic development. She also studied 12 students in greater depth. Her study included an investigation of the subgroups of gifted children and examined their achievement and adjustment patterns in order to identify the discriminated two groups of very high and even higher levels of intelligence in gifted learners (Hollingworth & Cobb, 1928). Her research and observations led her to conclude that as IQ scores increased, social adjustment with one's peers became increasingly more difficult. Adjustment behaviors included finding interesting work to do in school, relating to peers regardless of common interests, finding and developing leisure activities, understanding the appropriate time to argue and the time to conform as well as and addressing difficult philosophical, religious, and moral issues early (Hollingworth, 1931). Hollingworth's contribution of the body of thought concerning adjustment behaviors further underpinned the continuous reciprocal interaction of cognitive and environmental behaviors according to social learning theory.

Hollingworth's research was the first to examine the popular scientific belief of the time about the nature and social role of women. Her study of cognitive and motor skills of women disproved the medical belief that there were debilitating effects during their menstrual cycles. Additionally she addressed the "variability hypothesis," which holds that the psychological or physical dimension that females possess as a gender varied less from each other than those found in males (Hollingworth, 1914). It is through her studies that the psychology of women emerged to address some of the common feminist issues faced by women of the time. Additionally, gifted girls according to

Hollingworth faced the additional problem of socially defined opportunities and their personal preferences and interests.

Hollingworth's first gifted study (1922) included 50 children with the age range of seven to nine years and who possessed IQs over 155. The study served two purposes to understand the family backgrounds of the subjects, psychological makeup, and their physical, social, and temperament traits. The second purpose was to create a meaningful curriculum suited to benefit the gifted. In Hollingworth's book titled *Gifted Children* (1926), she discusses the results of the study. Her concept of an enriched curriculum for the gifted was viewed as undemocratic by many at the time.

The role of education and the environment played a role in giftedness not simply genetic inheritance. Hollingworth's work focused on nurturing and educating the gifted, contrary to the view of gifted educators of the time held bright children were sufficient unto themselves. Hollingworth's view of the lack of educational support for the gifted led her to support early identification of the gifted and the necessity of everyday contact with the gifted, merely isolated classroom experiences (Hollingworth, 1926).

Hollingworth summarized the challenges of the gifted child by stating, "To have the intelligence of an adult and the emotions of a child combined in a childish body is to encounter certain difficulties" (p. 15).

These early researchers used a single intelligence test to measure giftedness, a procedure which has been highly criticized in recent times for cultural bias, while penalizing students with differing learning styles. Terman's study (1954) recommended IQ retesting over time to determine the stability of IQ scores. Other studies in the 1930's

struggled with the stability of IQ and went on to determine a tendency for IQ to decline over time. Terman's studies did prove to support high level competence over time as the children developed into highly productive adults, but failed to prove extraordinary accomplishments expected of the highly gifted or genius. The controversy of the IQ test continues to reign in the academic arena, positing that the inequities of the intelligence test reflect the social and economic background of the test taker rather than an assessment of his or her abilities. 'Giftedness' as defined by Terman required a paradigm shift from categorical definitions to developmental trajectory. Categorical definitions permanently label a person gifted while developmental trajectory considers individual differences by allowing the student to demonstrate gifted behavior and talent at one point in his or her development and not at another time and/or exhibit exceptional skill in specific domains, but not across all the domains.

Domain Specific Talents

Paul Witty is noted for his scholarly study of one hundred gifted children, reminiscent of the Terman longitudinal study. Witty collected a sample of 50 children with IQs of 140. Over a four year period a second set of children were matched on gender, age, and race with a sample IQ of 90 to 110, to serve as the control group of typical children (Witty, 1930). Witty then went on to gather aptitude and achievement data and school data from records and teachers. Witty was most interested in nonintellective variables such as the changeability of play interests and information about home life from parents. Other data also included parent rating scales regarding social and moral traits. Additionally, Witty gathered information centered on school subject

performance from parents and teachers. Clearly, Witty was interested in domain specific talents. Witty's follow up study examined the physical development and health measures from school records and information of social and moral qualities, with added information of school and out of school activities, interests, and future plans. Witty's studies concurred with Terman regarding IQ. Witty's perspective about giftedness defined a balance of intelligence tests, a broad construct of drive and opportunity, with ability (Witty & Lehman, 1928). In a published manuscript titled "Speculation Regarding Data," Witty stated, "There must be, in addition to ability, the desire to achieve and a favorable environment. High IQ does not necessarily mean high creative productivity" (p. 41). Witty's research into domain specific talents influenced by the environment and opportunity on the development of the gifted learner clearly sets the stage for current concerns in gifted education.

Witty clearly believed in the influence of the classroom environment, and the curricular options, are a critical opportunity in the development of creative productivity to produce valuable human activity. This perspective of giftedness marked the importance of Bandura's social learning theory in the development of giftedness. Students observe others such as the teacher, experts in the field, and other advanced students in order to perform new behaviors. These, in turn, can later serve as a guide for significant action and productivity. Furthermore, the emphasis on the classroom environment allows for the continued opportunity for interaction between the cognitive, behavioral (behaviors that mimic experts in a given discipline), and the influence of the fertile and supportive environment to the development of the gifted learner. The

processes of observational learning serves to instill modeled opportunities and scenarios that are inherent in the gifted classroom, but also the expected characteristic behaviors in the various roles a learner can play in the classroom that mimics real world experiences. According to Bandura's theory, the observational behavior first is organized, modeled symbolically, and then enacted overtly. Modeled behaviors are best achieved by behaviors that are valued by the person.

Teacher Nomination

Martin Jenkins, an administrator in higher education and research, including a dissertation, which involved 103 high ability African American children from Chicago's South Side. Prior to completing his dissertation Jenkins published an article with his mentor, Witty, who studied the lives of 26 African American students in grades three to eight. Implementing screening methods similar to Terman in the segregated schools with a population of exclusively African American students, Witty had teachers nominate children they thought to be intelligent, strong, academically able students. Students then were given an aptitude test, the McCall Multi Mental Scale; any child who scored 120 on the test was given the Stanford-Binet. For the study Children included in their sample all had received 140 IQ or above. From this sample, the researchers found an extraordinary 9 year old with a reported IQ of 200, "The Case of 'B' - A Gifted Negro Girl" (Witty & Jenkins, 1935). The extraordinary case of "B" proved to be a remarkable contribution of their study especially considering that the Hollingworth and Terman studies did not contain any African American children. Additionally, Jenkins studies included the now required identification for giftedness via teacher nomination.

Teacher nomination a required identification tool, has proven to be a gatekeeper of gifted education which has been cited for its lack of scientific validation as teachers who are untrained in gifted education, insensitive to cultural manifestations of giftedness, or teachers who are biased about the makeup of giftedness. Teacher nominations can vary, but generally the nomination requires the teacher to evaluate academic, social skills, motivation and creative abilities. This nomination is determined by student performance in the classroom environment on the varied curricular choices and instructional procedures. In the field of gifted education, 86% of the teachers are white (Darling-Hammond, 1995). From a critical theory perspective, the teacher nomination has served as a constraint to perpetuate universally significant underrepresentation of minority students. Moreover, teachers fail to recognize characteristics of the gifted student, even more so low expectations and negative perceptions of minority students result in low referral rates of minority students in gifted education (Ford, 1998). Problems related to racism, segregation, and rigid beliefs of minority groups set the stage for the oppression of groups of students or individuals whose rights the policies were enacted to protect (Artiles & Trent, 1994).

Furthermore, Jenkins continued his interest in extremely high aptitude children by expanding his research to several geographical locations across the United States to include children with IQs of 160 and above (Jenkins, 1943). Jenkins findings diminished the findings of the time: advance student performance is not concomitant with their test performance. Jenkins case study approach proved to be a good methodology for studying extreme development in gifted research. His study was also able to conclude that highly

gifted African Americans are a variable group of individuals. Highly gifted African American children can have varied reactions to different societal restraints. His insights in the plight of the highly gifted African American student are echoed in his words “...these cases bring into sharp focus the limitations which our society places on the development of the highly gifted Negro. These children are nurtured in a culture in which [the] racial inferiority of the Negro is a basic assumption throughout their lives, educational, social and occupational restrictions, which must inevitably affect achievement and motivation” (p. 165). The Jenkins studies noted some of the continued concerns of gifted education and the impact of educational and social opportunities upon academic achievement and motivation.

Gifted Identification Defined

In 1969, Congress mandated a study by the Commissioner of Education to decide the extent of the needs of gifted and talented children. The Marland Report in 1972 contains the definition of giftedness that continues to be the most adopted definition by state and local educational agencies.

The Marland Report (1972) states:

Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who, by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These children require differential educational programs and/or services beyond those provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and the society. Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas,

singly or in combination: general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts and psychomotor ability. (p.8)

In 1993, the Federal Government released a second report which mirrored many of the words first used in the Marland Report and expanded the definition:

Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. These children or youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require activities not ordinarily provided in the school. Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor (United States Department of Education, 1993, p. 26).

New Paradigms of Gifted Identification

Olszewski-Kubilius (2003) noted that in the educational setting schools still identify students according to IQ and once assessed as gifted the label remains throughout the student's educational career. Conversely, if the score is not achieved, no further testing will occur. New paradigms reject the notion that giftedness is innate, permanent, and mysterious. Matthews and Foster (2006) identify it as the "mystery model" shift to the "mastery model," with relational implications to direct developmental theory, identification, and educational practices. The mastery model supports identification of individuals by gifts and talents on the high end of the spectrum with a

demonstration of exceptional performance in specific domains. The emergence of the domain exception can occur at different developmental points, but it is not necessarily a stable characteristic in the individual behavioral make up. Domain-specificity is a key component of the mastery approach. The mystery model espouses the outdated idea that gifted children are special, innately superior to their peers, categorically, or globally. This model tends to be problematic for the children so identified, as well as to their parents and teachers. This model of giftedness is static as opposed to the mastery model that sees the development of expertise and learning as an ongoing process that can ultimately be safeguarded to the appropriate level of gifted learning (Matthews & Folsom, 2009). The distinctions between the mystery model and the mastery model include: the emphasis of innate intelligence over environmental conditions, nature versus nurture; and the time span of gifted identification over a lifetime as opposed to educational modifications to meet the current needs of the learner. Other distinctions in the two models include educational placement of segregated, full time gifted classrooms and varied learning options that include acceleration, enrichment, and extracurricular opportunities, on-line classes, and full time gifted classes.

Defining giftedness is the foundation from which all educational programming serves the gifted student; funding for program services, assessment for evaluations and program development, and curricular options made available. The adopted definition will also serve to provide direction for guidance and the development of instruments in the identification process. Additionally, the definition provides direction for

programming practices that further develop the talents of gifted learners (Moon & Dixon, 2006).

Most school districts across the country adopt a definition of giftedness based on their philosophy, while others will only consider the intellectual ability for identifying and serving the gifted learner. How a school district defines giftedness should be determined by a theoretical rationale underlying their philosophy of giftedness which should be evident in their identification system (Coleman, 2003). In order for a school system to adopt a definition of giftedness the amount of money allotted to the school can determine the identification procedures. In some states a student can be identified and never serviced (Coleman & Gallagher, 1995).

Theoretical Models of Giftedness

Our great accomplishments as a human society can very well be traced through our most gifted and notable contributors. Historically, there is a fascination with our most gifted individuals and their respective areas of significance and contribution in almost every culture. Giftedness is ultimately determined by the values and requirements of the culture with the ongoing question of how giftedness has been influenced by natural abilities, personalities, and the surrounding environment (Sternberg & Davidson, 1986).

Domain General Models

The conceptions of giftedness are classified into three models. The first model of giftedness examined the scientific nature of giftedness, categorized as domain general models. Such models considered the hereditary nature of giftedness under the theory of giftedness provided in Francis Galton's book *Hereditary Genius* (1869). Galton's

concept of giftedness conceptualized genius as “. . . an ability that was exceptionally high and at the same time inborn” (Galton, 1892, p. *viii*). His theory found that genius ran in families and therefore, genius’ is an hereditary trait. Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon created the first of many test to assess higher level cognitive skills when they developed the Binet-Simon Intelligence Test. As mentioned, Lewis Terman adapted the Binet scale to create the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, the first tests of many to identify gifted children (Terman, 1916). Terman adapted Binet’s test while advocating Galton’s theory of genius to view giftedness as a single unit evidenced by high IQ. Terman’s classification for giftedness in school imposed an arbitrary IQ score of 135 to define as moderately gifted (Terman, 1916), an IQ score of 150 as exceptionally gifted, and above 180 as profoundly gifted (Webb, Meckstroth, & Tolan, 1982). The curriculum and instruction of domain general models require acceleration options to provide the rigor in the curriculum to adequately challenge the gifted child.

Domain Specific Models

The second model of giftedness is classified as domain specific models. Domain specific models emphasize the gifted area(s) of an individual. Thurstone (1938) is one of the earliest researchers to identify specific domains of giftedness in individuals.

Thurstone identified seven mental abilities: verbal comprehension, verbal fluency, number, perceptual speed, inductive reasoning, spatial visualization, and memory.

Presently two hierarchical theories have gained note and influence in the acceptance of modern intelligence tests: the theory of fluid intelligence and crystallized general intelligences (Horn & Cattell, 1966) and Carroll’s (1993) three stratum theory of

cognitive abilities. Fluid intelligence refers to the ability to process abstractions.

Crystallized intelligence is dependent on experience and cultural contexts, and learned knowledge.

Carroll's Stratum Model includes both specialized skills and general intelligence (fluid and crystallized intelligence). An example of a domain specific model would be Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (1983) model. Gardner's view of intelligence requires that educators expand on their understanding of intelligence that is neither static nor hierarchical but rather an independent cognitive system. Gardner defines giftedness as a significant precocious potential in one or more of the independent multiple intelligences to include linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligence. Domain specific models require enrichment services in the curriculum and instruction to develop the varied intelligences or talents of the gifted learner.

Systems Models

The systems model is the third category which represents a system view of giftedness-the development of giftedness is dependent on psychological processes that are operating simultaneously. Joseph Renzulli's (1978) theory of giftedness holds that gifted individuals possess three groups of traits. The Triad Model, also called the Three Ring Conception of Giftedness, comprises above average ability, task commitment, and creativity as evidence of giftedness. Giftedness, as defined by Renzulli, is the area of intersection of the three traits. The selection of the three traits in the model is the result of research studies on the characteristics of gifted individuals, the identified traits proved

necessary to produce high levels of creative productivity and or eminence in adults. The Three Ring Conception of Giftedness considers general ability as a constant over time, while specific abilities, task commitment, and creativity are functions of the contextual situation (Renzulli, 2002). Above average ability is defined by two areas of focus: general ability and specific ability. General ability refers to the capacity to process information, integrate new experiences in new situations, and engage in abstract thinking (Renzulli, 2002). Specific ability is the capacity to acquire knowledge or skill to perform in a specialized area. Curriculum and instruction is developed through enrichment methods and materials to promote the development of cognitive thinking and affective feeling processes. Above average ability is considered as the top 15-20% of performance in any given area. Task commitment is a focused form of motivation. Task commitment represents the energy a person can bring to the task. Creativity is a recognizable creative trait person in having the ability to generate interesting and feasible ideas. Renzulli's definition is derived from ". . . work on a conception of giftedness that challenged the traditional view of this concept as mainly a function of high scores on intelligence tests" (Renzulli, 2003, p. 75).

Another systems model is Robert Sternberg's Triarchic Model that specifies the distinguishing traits of gifted individuals. Sternberg's (1991) diagnostic approach to ability identifies specific talents or aptitudes as the focus for identification and services. Intelligence has three distinct forms: analytic, synthetic, and practical. Analytical intelligence refers to analytical reasoning and reading comprehension as measured by an intelligence test. Synthetic intelligence is recognized as insightful, intuitive creative and

easily adept at novel contexts (Sternberg, 1997). Practical intelligence entails applying analytical and synthetic abilities to everyday situations (Sternberg, 1997). Curriculum and instruction should vary according to the specific intelligence and the various learning styles of the gifted learner. Sternberg's implicit theory of giftedness includes five conditions that are common to gifted persons: excellence, rarity, productivity, demonstrability, and value. Sternberg's implicit theory is derived from a personal conception of giftedness through the sum total of a person's experiences with gifted education and gifted individuals (Miller, 2008).

Developmental Models

The fourth model of giftedness is classified into the developmental models. Developmental theories of giftedness view gifts as ever changing and evolving by considering both the external and internal factors that interact in a person to produce the gifted behavior. Francoys Gagne's developmental model of giftedness differentiates between giftedness and talent. Gagne's research (1985, 1993) and model for talent development provides for a focus on talents. Gagne's concept of giftedness and talent are defined in his Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent. Giftedness is superior natural skill expressed in one's ability. This natural ability, through interaction of interpersonal catalyts (motivation, personality, and self-management), and environmental catalyts (persons, provisions, events) develop the skill or talent in a particular field (Miller, 2008). Superior performance can occur in human aptitude in the domains of creative, intellectual, socio-affective, or sensorimotor. Aptitudes refer to the innate natural abilities, while talent represents the mastery level of knowledge and skills

(Moon & Dixon, 2006). Aptitudes are predictors of future achievement (Sternberg & Williams, 2002; Woolfolk, 2004). Talents evolve from aptitudes over time as the result of long term systematic learning. Interpersonal motivators can serve to assist or inhibit in the developmental process of aptitudes; these are motivators physical characteristics, motivation, volition, self-management, and personality (Moon & Dixon, 2006). Talent development is exhibited as the child engages in systematic learning and practice at an advanced level the more demanding these three activities will be (Gagne, 2003).

John Feldhusen's (1986) developmental model defines giftedness as a composite of general intellectual ability, positive self-concept, achievement motivation and talent,— a synthesis of some of the aforementioned models. Feldhusen's conception of giftedness centers on the characteristics and needs of children who have demonstrated themselves as very able learners rather than looking at eminent and accomplished talented adults (Feldhusen & Kolloff, 1986). Feldhusen further distinguishes giftedness in the formative years as a physical and psychological predisposition for superior learning and performance. Feldhusen believes that all students have the potential to develop their human talents beyond the narrow perspective posed in many of our schools (Feldhusen, 1986). In order to further develop the talent of exceptional students greater access to instructional resources and programs provided to these students as should be compared with their peers (Feldhusen, 1986). In adulthood, high level achievement or performance is one manifestation of giftedness. Feldhusen, like Gagne, believed the development of giftedness is largely due to opportunity (Moon & Dixon, 2006). Schools and families are major influences in nurturing or failing in this task. According to Feldhusen (1998)

“...talent identification is a long-term process that depends on a wide variety of tests and challenging learning experiences in which teachers and others provide feedback that students come to understand the nature of their own talents and to commit themselves to their long-range development” (p. 735).

The conception of giftedness has evolved over time to include creativity, motivation, social acuity, and aesthetic acuteness (McClellan, 1985). The current national definition of giftedness identifies students who display evidence of potential or high performance in areas such as intellect, creativity, artistic talent, leadership, or in specific academic fields (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). As indicated in the research, the conception of giftedness has varied interpretations, but in a broader sense, giftedness has remained defined as exceptional intellectual ability and potential to demand high performance in a specific academic field.

Adolescent Identity Development

Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development is the basis of our current understanding of adolescence. Through Erikson’s clinical work with World War II veterans transitioning from soldier to civilian status, he came to recognize that the adolescent faced a similar experience when transitioning from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. It is from his clinical work and research that the formation of adolescent identity formation emerged (Erikson, 1968).

Erikson (1964) proposed that “Identity. . . is not the sum of childhood identifications, but rather a new combination of old and new identification fragments” (p. 90). Erikson (1963) went on further to say that “Identity is the accrued experience of the

ego's ability to integrate all identifications with the vicissitudes of the libido, with the aptitudes developed out of endowment, and with the opportunities offered in social roles" (p. 261). According to Erikson (1964), a person is the sum of the processes one undergoes in various episodes over one's lifetime. Identity is a process, not an end to reach a final goal, "A sense of identity is never gained or maintained once and for all" (p. 118). To understand a person it is necessary to examine and evaluate the processes one undergoes in becoming who they believe they can become.

Erik Erikson's framework relies upon the principle of epigenesis. Development of the individual occurs sequentially, defined by stages that must be met satisfactorily and resolved in order for development to proceed. If a stage is not successfully resolved, later stages will fail in the form of a physical, cognitive, social, or emotional maladjustment. Erikson's life span theory about psychosocial development defines eight stages of personality development (1968). Erikson's framework proposes that humans continue to grow and develop throughout the life cycle. Childhood and adult experiences, alike develop human personality. In each stage of the personality development, the individual confronts a major crisis that will lead to a healthy or unhealthy trait. The individual must consistently make meaningful and acknowledged accomplishments and achievements in order to acquire a strong healthy ego identity. Central to this theory is the attainment of ego identity, and the necessary exploration of issues surrounding identity development so typical of adolescence. Erikson's general framework includes the following: an unfavorable environment can delay a developmental stage, while a favorable environment can accelerate a person's progress through a life stage. Additionally, each

stage has no definite period; in fact, an unfinished stage can carry over into the next stage. Before moving to the next level each stage with its unique characteristics must be successfully met; a person can regress to an earlier stage in part or completely (Erikson, 1968).

Adolescents and into their through adulthood ask questions such as, “Who am I? What am I all about? What is my purpose?” These questions, which are central to identity development, help to form identity achievement versus role confusion in the roles an adolescent will play as adults. In this phase of development, the adolescent is learning to find his or her way in the complex world by developing goals, opinions, and attitudes. In Erikson’s assessment, individuals who had established their identity knew firmly who they were. Therefore, they understood the direction in which they were heading, and were comfortable where they fit into society. This identity process begins in adolescence and many factors influence its development. Despite cultural variations, Erikson believed that all societies had a psychosocial moratorium, a time in which teens were expected to make commitments for life and ascertain a solid self-definition. Thus, the moratorium was followed by a sense of crisis. This identity crisis serves as a turning point, not a period of debilitation. Erikson termed this crisis as a turning point when development must make a move in one direction or another. Erikson believed that identity concerns will occur throughout a person’s lifetime, but that adolescence was critical for identity formation. Adolescents are constantly making decisions about careers, religious or moral values, the kind of man or woman they are becoming, and so forth. Erikson used the term “identity crisis” to refer to the confusion and anxiety

experienced by pondering these various questions (Shaffer, 2000). Identity comprised three separate components: occupation choice, approval of values to live by, and the conviction of sexual identity—all are required to establish and resolve the identity crisis necessary to develop into satisfied adults in their identity, to help in moving forward to commit to jobs, beliefs, and others. Adolescents who are unable to establish their identity will move into role confusion, which will make it difficult to achieve intimacy or personal satisfaction in adulthood. Identity formation is the most critical challenge of adolescence because it is a required precursor to adulthood (Erikson, 1968). Identity formation is a long process that essentially “...involves a commitment to a vocational direction, and an ideological stance, and a sexual orientation” (Santrock, 2003, p. 302).

Human Potential

Maslow’s hierarchal theory of human needs (1943) centers on human potential. According to Maslow, a person will strive to reach the highest levels of his or her abilities. Maslow’s theory describes four basic needs that must be met before a person can reach his or her full potential: 1) physiological: hunger, thirst, bodily comforts; 2) safety/security: out of danger; 3) belongingness and love: affiliation with others is accepted; and 4) esteem, to achieve, be competent, gain approval and recognition. Basic needs that have been met will cause social and affiliation structures to emerge. As social beings, according to Maslow, belonging to a social group is a need. Dominant social needs require a person to strive for meaningful relationships. Group membership that is meaningful motivates the person to be more than a group member and to seek esteem needs, to include both self-esteem and recognition by others. Furthermore, the first level

of esteem needs includes the need for the respect of others, for status and attention, appreciation, dominance and dignity. The second level of esteem needs includes the need for self-respect, confidence, competence, and freedom. In addition, the highest level of esteem is more difficult to lose once a person has satisfied these needs. Gifted students needs are centered on the need for esteem and self-actualization. Esteem needs, when sufficiently satisfied, direct a person to self-actualization, and the need to maximize one's potential. As Maslow stated, "What a man can be, he must be" (1954, p. 48). Self-actualization is the motivating necessity to become all one is capable of becoming.

Entelechy

Entelechy as defined by Michael Piechowski (2006) is [in] "Exceptional individuals a vital force guiding the person's life, imparting a vision of its purpose and sense of destiny; it is the self developmental agenda" (228). Entelechy is one of the five social/emotional traits common to the gifted, the other traits being divergent thinking, excitability, sensitivity, and perceptiveness all of which can result in social and emotional vulnerability. Entelechy, a characteristic inherent in a gifted disposition, is a form of motivation, which guides the inner will of the gifted (Lovecky, 1993). Entelechy is an attribute of the self, individually developed by the gifted. Entelechy is defined as a need for self-determination and is guided by a person's inner strength so as to direct his or her existence and growth to become all one is capable of being (Lovecky, 1990b). Entelechy, if employed, can motivate the gifted individual toward realizing his or her fullest potential. Maslow's theory of self-actualization resembles this form of motivation (Maslow, 1954). It is why gifted individuals seem to have within them a will to strive for

something higher. Gifted individuals with entelechy are single-minded, self-willed, highly motivated, and single focused.

Moral Development

Defining moral development can generate many definitions, some of which include the ability to reason the universal concepts of justice and fairness, and the ability to empathize with and to act in order to alleviate others' suffering. Regardless of the definition, the necessity of reasoning and compassion helps to formulate moral actions. Morality, according to Gardner (1999), is about personality, individuality, will, and character that supposes cultural values and is necessary to attain the maximum consciousness of human nature. Piechowski (1979) posits that one's moral characteristics are related to aspects of human development; the emotional form facilitates the developmental potential to advance mental functioning, an essential part of forming moral sensitivity. Furthermore, advanced moral development is linked to emotional sensitivity, compassion, and moral conviction, which in sum total expedites self-actualization (Piechowski, 1979).

Psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg (1958) developed a cognitive developmental theory of moral development using a modified and elaborated structure of Piaget's theory. Kohlberg's model of moral development includes three major levels with each level indicating a primary modification in the social-moral perspective of the individual.

In the Preconventional Morality stage, a child is considered amoral. For a child morality is viewed in light of the punishment and reward stage; good and bad are determined by the physical consequences. Adults set the rules and the child must follow

the rule. Morality at this stage is an external force enforced by those with the power to punish and reward. Moral reasoning is egocentric in this stage with little interest or concern for others. Stage two of this level is known as the exchange stage, the recognition, and consideration of others' interests. One follows the rule when it is one's urgent interest. In concrete terms simple exchange or reciprocity occur between the child and individuals. In this stage being fair is of more importance than justice (Kohlberg, 1958).

Kohlberg's (1958) Conventional Morality is the level on which most adults operate. In this Conventional level, the individual reasons that understanding norms and conventions are required to sustain society. They tend to self-identified with these rules, and uphold them consistently, viewing morality as acting in accordance with them. Although elementary age children are capable of operating at this level, they will sometimes revert to the preconventional level. Stage three is known as the good boy/good girl stage. The child at this stage attempts to live up to the expectations of others and to gain approval. At this stage, intentions and motives are deliberate while the principles of loyalty, trust, and gratitude are understood. The Golden Rule is enacted concretely for children at this stage. Finally, stage four, also known as the law and order stage, is where the individuals can now see the social system as a whole. Society's rules of right and wrong are readily reinforced, while duty and respect play key roles for authority.

At Postconventional Morality, adults on this level can go further and move beyond moralities based on authority to reason. Stage five, the social contract stage,

brings an awareness of the degree of morality that is relative to the individual or the social group to which they belong to and an understanding of only a few universal fundamental principles. On this level, a person seeks to develop rational contracts between him-or himself and others by being kind to one another, respecting authority, following the rules to the scope of respect, and advocating for the universal values. Social contract morality centers more on the side of the utilitarian approach where value is placed on the common good for the greatest number of peoples. In stage six, the stage of universal principles, the person makes a commitment to the universal principles of equal rights and respect. In this stage, the social customs are diminished in light of the universal principles that take precedence. Kohlberg's moral development theory examines the development of the autonomous self regardless of gender, the ability to determine abstract principles of justice, equity, and equality through a methodical solution determined by the variations of interests (Kohlberg, 1958). Kohlberg's findings attributed differences in the use of care and justice orientations to the nature of the problem and not the result of gender (Kohlberg, 1958, 1981).

Moral sensitivity is an identifiable characteristic of the gifted child from an early age. Gifted students are more sensitive and aware of values and moral issues, as they affect others and the situation (Galbraith, 1985; Roeper, 1988; Silverman, 1993, 1994). Gifted children and adolescents develop and refine an internalized system of values and justice at an early age. As a result, the gifted child will be more apt to be fair, honest, and to evaluate others according to their same standards. Gifted students develop an interest in social issues, especially concerns in which their sense of reason and justice have been

violated. This advanced ability to care about others, to empathize, and to identify with abstract concepts of justice and fairness can be found in the early experiences with parents, primary caretakers, and other children, and are the basis of identity formation and the development of self (Lovecky, 1997). There is a definitive connection between cognitive and affective functioning (Goleman, 1995). The connection between the affective domain and cognitive processing can be validated by many theories. As previously discussed in identity development, Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1971), Kohlberg's stages of moral development (Kohlberg, 1974), Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration (Dabrowski, 1964) and overexcitabilities (Dabrowski & Piechowski, 1977), as well as in Krathwohl's affective taxonomy (Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964) all confirm the clear connection in various aspects to the social-emotional and cognitive processing of the gifted individual.

From Terman (1925), moral sensitivity studies of the gifted have shown the gifted child to be advanced in trustworthiness and moral stability. Hollingworth's (1942) studies provided examples of early moral awareness and at the same time, noted the tendency in some gifted students to use their intelligence to avoid academic tasks or take advantage of less intelligent students. Hollingworth (1942) provided specific traits of moral development such as loyalty to standards, readiness to admit to criticisms, and unselfishness (p. 121). The Gross (1993) study of children with IQ scores of 180 were revealed that they above their peers in conceptualizations of fairness, justice, responsibility for self and others. Silverman (1994) posits that advanced moral sensitivity is an essential characteristic of gifted, compassionate individuals with an intense awareness to

world issues and the feelings of others. Silverman (1994) noted that the gifted demonstrate advanced moral development in comparison to their non-gifted peers. Further studies on the college level and high school level by Janos and Robinson (1985) found that highly gifted students exhibited high levels of moral reasoning and judgment on the Defining Issues Test (DIT) (Rest, 1979). On the high school level, Howard-Hamilton (1994) found gifted high school students were above the norm of their age peers on the DIT, while Gross (1993) cited evidence to indicate that some highly exceptional students have scored above college levels on the DIT.

Moral Development of Women

Carol Gilligan (1982), a pioneer in the research of moral development of women, was one of the major critics of Kohlberg's work as she postulates in her book, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Gilligan developed a stage theory of moral development that argued that women have an orientation toward care and concern, which emphasizes human relationships and connections as well as the care and well-being people with whom they are involved. Gilligan's feminist research of female moral development clearly dispelled Kohlberg's research that women lacked the ability to have moral development. Through this breakthrough research, Gilligan not only exposed the oppressive restraints of Kohlberg's research, but made a commitment to uncover and understand all females. Gilligan stressed that males and females have different inclinations of moral conflict. Men will impose rights, laws, obligations, and fairness upon moral conflicts. Women will innately move toward relationships of care and concern in moral decisions. While both sexes are capable of ethical, fairness, and

relationships of care and concern, each gender has predisposed orientations because of gender and their first relationships developed as a child with their mothers. Kohlberg's theory failed to address the female gender, but from Kohlberg's study Gilligan was able to prove girls exercise different orientations from boys. From a critical theorist perspective Gilligan's research exposed the self-imposed oppressive restraints of moral conflict in girls that lie within the self and others. Gilligan's theoretical framework of ethics of care for moral development for females is developed over three stages.

As Patricia Maguire (1987) sums up more concretely:

Feminism is: (a) a belief that women universally face some form of oppression or exploitation; (b) a commitment to uncover and understand what causes and sustains oppression, in all its forms and (c) a commitment to work individually and collectively in everyday life to end all forms of oppression (p. 79).

The Preconventional level: stage one of Gilligan's theory orientates women towards individual survival-selfishness to responsibility. Self is the focus of concern (Belknap, 2000). Therefore, the first transition moves a person from selfishness toward being responsible. The main concern at the Conventional level stage two takes the individual from goodness because of self-sacrifice. It is at this stage that a woman will adopt social values and social affiliations; this stage is referred to as a transition from goodness to truth. At the Post Conventional level: stage three, the self needs are purposefully revealed, the focus moves to the dynamics of relationships and through this process the woman can move from her individual needs to consider the cost of self and

other (Belknap, 2000). The care for others extended beyond personal, familial relationships to an acknowledgement of the interdependence of self and others aligned to a universal rejection of exploitation and harm.

The distinguishing factor of Carol Gilligan's theory of moral development is the growth of self in relation to others. Morality is the preservation of significant human relations. The mounting awareness and insight of human relationships advances through the stages. From the critical feminist theorist, this constant awareness and insight can both advance and restrain the female in her moral development by both her self-imposed and societal relations. Giligan and Attanucci's (1988) study titled, "Two Moral Orientations: Gender Differences and Similarities," examined care and justice in 46 men and 34 women, principally adolescents. In interview narratives, two thirds of the subjects demonstrated a proclivity to one voice of dominance over the other when faced with real life moral dilemmas. Despite the opportunity of males and females (high school students, college students, medical students, and adult professionals) to select another voice, individuals demonstrate dominant focus phenomenon. Individuals in the study preferred one voice to another. More than half of the 34 women in the study preferred the care voice. Conversely, of the 46 males in the study 30 preferred the justice voice. Males in conflict will select the justice orientation. The importance of rights, justice, and obligations are central to males. Females, according to Gilligan, will center on care orientation valuing the importance of both orientations, but one is preferred. The study demonstrates several key points: a) justice and care represented in a person's thinking concerning real life moral dilemmas dependent upon their gender, b) there is a

relationship between moral orientation and gender, and women tend to center on care dilemmas.

Brown and Gilligan (1992) contributed to an understanding of girls' development by conducting interviews with girls in first, fourth, seventh, and tenth grades as well as in several years as follow ups. Their research study, documented in *Meeting at the Crossroads (1992)*, examined ". . . reframing psychology as a practice of relationship by voicing the relationships that are at the heart of psychological inquiry and growth" (p. 22). Their approach to document the varying approaches that girls take to integrating ". . . their rich emotional lives with the narrowing visions of nice and kind women leaves them struggling with the difference between true and false relationships" (p. 88). Voice became a key factor for the girls who were to be pressured to be selfless, voiceless in relationships, and to experience self by expressing a voice is essential to a girls' experience in an authentic relationship (Brown and Gilligan, 1992). By listening to the voices of girls, the researchers identified the impact of morality to validate psychologically debilitating decisions girls and women are compelled to make in relationships, while adversely creating internal and external barriers to girls' facility to speak in relationships and progress uninhibitedly in the world (Brown and Gilligan, 1992).

Girls' morality is defined by her relationships and the voices she is able to express in her relationships as previously discussed and documented (Gilligan and Brown, 1992). These relationships can both aid or debilitate girls and women in various facets of their lives, according to feminist critical theory. Gifted girls' achievement needs shift to

relationship needs in adolescence as examined by both Groth (1969) and Brown and Gilligan's studies (1992). Gilligan came to understand that women saw their identity through experiences of attachment and separation, important transitions that shape their lives (Hebert & Kelly, 2006). Women's identity is defined in the context of relationships, the amount of responsibility and their interest within the relationship. Josselson (1996) further explained, "Identity in women is more rooted in being than in doing and [a] woman's life story is often centered on how she experiences herself, or wishes to experience herself, with others" (p. 32).

In order to understand the academic self-perception and performance of a gifted female one must keep in mind that moral development in girls is defined by their relationships. From a critical feminist theorist framework, relationships in a girl's life can either cripple or support a girl in the various facets of her life. Furthermore, the adolescent girl who had a need to achieve now has a need to have meaningful relationships in which she has both an interest and responsibility to define her identity.

Gender Role and Self-Concept

Gender role identity refers to the image a person has of masculine and feminine characteristics. Both socialization and aptitude influence gender identity and the formation of the conceptual gender framework, what it means to be male and female (Woolfolk, 2004). Female students are less likely to take advanced math courses while male students are identified more as advanced math students (Parsons, Meece, Adler, & Kaczala, 1982). Reading and writing are feminine subjects in schools (O'Neill, 2000). Girls do well in school because of gender socialization (Sadker, Sadker, & Steindam,

1989). More girls will graduate as valedictorians, but for them, the final choice between motherhood or career is still unclear (Sadker, Sadker, & Zittleman, 2009). Marriage and motherhood still hold as the most important contribution a girl can make in society (Sadker, Sadker, & Zittleman, 2009). Teachers interact more with boys (Brenner, 1998). By gender, girls learn to be silent members of a classroom, while the teachers have to manage the boys. To keep boys on task teachers will direct more questions to them (Sadker, Sadker, & Zittleman, 2009). Traditional values in girls, such as nurturing the young, caring for others, and helping a person in need is devalued in a culture which revolves around historical male priorities (Eisler, 2007).

William James' (1892) development of self-concept is defined by one's self image and self evaluation in the cognitive process of the individual, the competency, and accomplishment in the performance of a task. Cooley (1902) went on to further state that self-concept is the resulting influence of significant others upon the individual which entails: the perception of others, the individual's perceived evaluation of others, and the way in which others perceive self, as well as the affective response of the individual to the situation. The current definition of self-concept includes ". . . our attitudes, feelings and knowledge about our abilities, skills, appearance, and social acceptability" (Byrne, 1984, p. 429). Self-concept is defined as the way one perceives oneself (Pajares & Schunk, 2001), which focuses on both the meaning and assessed value of self-perception acted out in our behavior and not our feelings (Strein, 1993, p. 273) Self-concept contributes significantly to personality formation. Self-esteem, on the other hand, can be defined as one's social competence, that influences how one feels, thinks, learns, values

self, and relates to others, to directly impact how one behaves (Clark, Clems, & Bean, 2000; Clems & Bean, 1996). In other words, self-esteem becomes stressed if one fails in areas of an expected success. On the contrary, if we fail in areas of low expectations, there is little impact. Furthermore, Katz (1994) purports perceived social status, perception of teachers and peers, participation in class discussions, and self-directed learning can either positively or negatively be linked depending on how those impressions are internalized and processed. Research development in the field has agreed that the development of self-concept has both internal and external forces that affect self-concept (Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton, 1976).

Self-Concept and Academic Performance

Many studies have investigated the causal relationship or pattern of academic performance. Some studies state that academic performance and self-concept are directly related while others cannot prove the direct relationship. Therefore, the researcher has chosen to include common patterns established by known experts in the field.

1. Academic performance is determined by self-concept. Academic experiences whether successful or not affect self-concept and self image. Success has more of an impact than does failure as explained by the role of evaluation of significant others or the theory of social comparison (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Psycho-pedagogical interventions can therefore be put into place to improve academic performance.
2. Levels of self-concept determine academic achievement. Therefore, significant others can affect the level of self-concept to increase the level of academic

performance of a student. Teachers can have a significant role in this process. By improving levels of school performance levels of self-concept can be optimized (Fantuzzo, Tighe & Child, 2000)

3. Academic performance and self-concept mutually influence and determine each other (Marsh, 1990; Alexander, 1997; Castor, 1997).
4. Other variables that may influence both self-concept and academic performance include personal and environmental variables, academic, and non-academic variables (Bandura, 1986).

Harter's (1986) theoretical model includes both internal and external factors.

Global self-worth, according to the model, is the byproduct of the competence/importance discrepancy and social support/positive regard. Consequently, self worth can impact both affect and motivation. Self-concept holds views of self in the general sense of self-concept, such as self-worth, self-esteem, and social and academic self-concepts. In adolescence, self-concept takes on more complex forms of self (Erikson, 1968; Harter, 1986). Student self-worth can affect student learning and instructional effectiveness (Bandura, 1997). The gifted female student must establish their self-concept in the adolescent years of her academic career in an effort to thwart the influence of female ability perceptions on achievement potentials. The research of Reis and Park (2001) has linked self-concept, locus of control, and achievement test scores. Data from the National Education Longitudinal Study (1988) indicates that high achieving males have higher s than high achieving females.

In the gifted student high ability, which results in authentic concrete accomplishments enhances self-esteem. The child who can succeed at such levels of achievement is expected to have a high level of self-esteem referred to as internal cognitive processes according to Harter's (1986) model. Gifted exceptional ability is demonstrated by superior performance. In the areas of exceptionality, it is enhanced. Self-esteem, or global self-worth, is reliant on the importance the gifted individual places on the areas of exceptionality as referenced in the Harter (1986) model. Gifted students universally have both higher academic and social self-concepts (Ross & Parker, 1980). Academic self-concept has a positive link to achievement and peer status in the gifted student (Plucker & Stocking, 2002).

Another basis for a more positive self-concept in the gifted individual is from the label of gifted. An individual labeled intellectually or creatively gifted communicates a positive expectation (Cornell, 1983; Sapon-Shevin, 1984, 1987, 1989). The positive expectation according to the social support or positive regard of the Harter (1986) model will enhance self-esteem. Self-esteem is impacted by the value the gifted individual places on the opinions.

According to the Attribution Theory, students attribute their academic success and failure based on effort, ability, the difficulty of task, and luck. The academic outcome affects how these constructs are implemented. Students generally achieve or underachieve in school based on their efforts, abilities, and beliefs in self (Good & Brophy, 1986). Students considered to be high achieving will attribute their success to effort and ability, while their failures will be the result of a lack of effort (Siegle & Reis,

1998). Underachieving students generally attribute their successes to external factors of luck, and their failures to lack of ability. Gender role does affect attribution. Gifted girls in high school have higher grade point averages than do boys, which results in an advantage of achievement potentials (Card, Steele, & Abeles, 1980). Conversely, achievement test scores favor academically talented boys (American College Testing Program, 1989). Standardized tests still indicate an advantage of high school males in scoring higher on verbal and quantitative test sections. Although the gap is smaller than a decade ago it still exists in test scores (ETS 2006; Halpern, 1989; Rosser, 1989). Consequently, gifted females attribute their high grades to not being as bright as boys and their success only comes with working harder. Lower test scores affect the expectations of girls, such as applying to less prestigious colleges or confidence in rigorous coursework or careers (Reis & Herbert, 1998). Academically talented boys will attribute their success to ability and failure to the lack of effort (Herbert 2001), while the same academically talented girls will view their success as luck or effort and their failure to lack of ability (Garrison, 1993; Reis & Callahan, 1996; Reis, 1998).

Gifted Female

The status of girls proves to be a promising testimony showing significant gains in school achievement, educational attainment, wages, and employment. Despite the gap between the genders having narrowed it stills persists in some areas. Gifted programs serve more girls than boys across the nation. Yet girls drop out of gifted programs by a greater percentage than boys do (Navan, 2009). Additionally, in some disciplines, women are not represented as leaders (Sadker, Sadker, D. & Zittleman, 2009).

In 2004, on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test, girls scored higher than boys in reading, while boys scored higher than girls did on the math and science tests. Girls might have taken more Advanced Placement exams in English in 2002, but their test score average was lower than that of boys. In the same year, more males took Advanced Placement exams in science and calculus and achieved higher scores in social studies, calculus, and computer science (Freeman, 2004).

High school graduation rates are higher with girls and they are more likely to attend college immediately following graduation (Freeman, 2004). In 2001-2002, 57% of the bachelor's degrees, 59% of masters', and 46% of doctoral degrees were awarded to females (Fox, Connolly, & Synder, 2005). Although the number of degrees increases yearly, women most likely will graduate with degrees in education, social sciences, history, psychology, biology/life sciences, and business management. Only a small fraction of females will graduate with doctoral degrees in engineering, mathematics, statistics, physical science, and science technologies (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005).

The research on gifted girls has sought to address characteristics of gifted girls relative to gifted boys to explain some of the disparities that continue to exist in achievement outcomes. Several authors have identified gender differences in motivational variables such as self-efficacy, self-perceptions attitudes, and aspirations. Additionally, stereotype threat also can affect test performance of high achieving female students (Kitano, 2008).

Pajares' study (1996) examined the predictive and mediational role that self-efficacy beliefs play in the mathematical problem solving of middle school gifted students who are mainstreamed with regular education students in algebra classes. The self-efficacy of gifted students made an autonomous contribution to the prediction of problem solving. Gifted girls surpassed gifted boys in performance, but did not vary in self-efficacy. Gifted students reported higher math self-efficacy and self-efficacy for self-regulated learning as well as lower math anxiety than did regular education students. Even though most students were overconfident about their competence, gifted students had more accurate self-perceptions and gifted girls were predisposed toward under confidence. The study indicated that there is no significant difference between middle school gifted girls and boys as related to self-efficacy (Pajares, 1996). Results support the hypothesized role of self-efficacy in Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory.

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory represents a break from the traditional learning theories of the time. Bandura's theory emphasizes the social origins of behavior as well as the cognitive factors, central to human functioning. Learning can occur in the absence of direct reinforcement through observation models. Students' beliefs about their abilities allow them to successfully perform academic tasks, or self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, beliefs are strong predictors of student capability to accomplish tasks. Bandura (1997) observed that a person interprets the results of his or her experiences; these personal interpretations serve as a powerful determinant of academic performances and subsequent performances. Self-efficacy beliefs help verify what students will do with the knowledge and skills they possess. In sum, academic

performance is influenced and predictive of a person's perceptions of what they believe they can accomplish. Moreover, self-efficacy beliefs operate as distinct limits of behavior by influencing the choices an individual will make, the amount of effort expended, and the thought patterns and emotional reactions to experiences (Bandura, 1997).

Gifted girls and boys have similar levels of confidence in their abilities yet there is a difference in expectations of future career goals and family. Gifted boys hold some traditional views of their future wives, which can, in turn, negatively affect gifted girls. Affected by their attitude about the subject is girls' science course selections, but not for boys. Stereotype threat confirms the fear that gifted girls can have about performance on math tests from age five through university experiences (Steele, 2003).

The barriers to achievement in the gifted girl can be both external and internal. External barriers are societal barriers such as society's views of femininity. Families and schools not having recognized the giftedness of girls by not acknowledging nor identifying them cannot accommodate the needs of the gifted female or provide services for her potential (Navan, 2009). As a result, gifted girls who are not identified and supported in their potential can become isolated and helpless (Adams, 1996; Lovecky, 1996; Sands & Howard-Hamilton, 1995). Society's attitudes about the academic potentiality of girls and their academic acceleration can become another obstacle. The self-perception and self-confidence of gifted girls declines over their academic careers and oftentimes girls will disguise their abilities. Unchallenging and hostile school environments become additional barriers to gifted girls. From birth, girls believe that

their career choice includes career and family. The gifted female must have an understanding of her high sensitivity and over excitabilities. The need for the gifted female to develop through relationships and set high academic and career goals places her at risk of not accomplishing her gifted potential relationships and can make or break her success (Navan, 2009). Some of the significant characteristics to develop gifted females include early career education; the vital influence of parents, educators, mentors, role models; underachievement; and assistance in affective and emotional development (Navan, 2009).

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the theoretical underpinnings from gifted identification, conceptions of giftedness, moral development, adolescent identity development, gender and self-concept theories. This framework guided the researcher to examine the gifted female in the context of her moral development, identity, gender, and self-concept so as to emerge as uniquely female. Additionally, this chapter has highlighted the unique characteristics of the gifted to better understand the influences of gifted identification on academic performance and self-perception in the social context of school. Another goal of this chapter was to describe the overlapping relationship of school experiences on self to academic performance.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The researcher examined the social construct of giftedness in the world of the adolescent female. The study provided for the examination of the psychological concept of the adolescent gifted female self in order to investigate resilience, autonomy, and self-efficacy as created and nurtured through her immediate community: home, school, and her affiliation with other gifted females (Navan, 2009). Quantitative data included the results of each of the nine domains on the measure from the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA; Harter, 1988) to examine gifted females' domains of self-perception. The qualitative information from the responses of the semi-structured interviews of the gifted females revealed the narrative behind the domains of self-perception as reported by gifted females from the purposeful sample. This lens of giftedness and the female self allowed the researcher to understand the gifted females' perceptions as formed by the participants through their subjective lenses in order to create broad patterns (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Research Design

The study used a mixed methods sequential explanatory design, a mixed methods approach with two distinct phases of data collection and analyses. This investigation lent itself to a mixed methods approach and the research design for the study of the problem and the research questions as proposed by the design. The research design allowed the quantitative data collected in the initial phase to inform the qualitative data collection in the second phase and for the qualitative data to explain the results of the quantitative data

analyses (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). The design used allowed the qualitative data to explain the results of the self-perception domains obtained in the quantitative phase. Imposing a phenomenological approach to the research, the qualitative data provided meaning and words to the gifted female's lived experience through the interviews (Van Manen, 1990). The design ensured the credibility of the findings from the SPPA and the interview process as the two data sources, by triangulating the theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, and data sources; therefore, the findings are rich, robust, comprehensive, and well developed for a deeper understanding of the gifted females' self-perceptions. Further, the diverse views garnered through the qualitative interviews balanced the relationship of the researcher and participant views and provided meaning to the findings (Bryman, 2006). The information provided from the diverse views of the gifted female balanced the interpretation of the findings.

The study began with the quantitative collection of data from the nine domains on the SPPA results, followed by the analysis of those data. First, the researcher analyzed the data by conducting the means and standard deviations of the SPPA results to determine the significant domains. A two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the patterns and trends of the domain scores and possible factors, which are grade level, group (ethnicity), or age to determine the degree of relationship between variables, significant domains, grade level, group (ethnicity), or age. The interviewed participants provided the quantitative sample from the results of SPPA. Interviews were semi-structured. Finally, these two data sources, the results of the SPPA

and the interview responses, were merged to create a comprehensive explanation of gifted high school females' perceptions of their academic selves (QUAN→QUAL).

Participants and Sampling

A purposeful sample of one hundred fifty gifted female high school students were invited to participate in the study. The purposeful sample included: gifted female students in grades 9-12, who are enrolled in the gifted program at Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and for the school year 2010-2011.

Forty participants of the one hundred fifty invited participants agreed to participate. The purposeful sample included multiple grades and groups (ethnicities) selected from Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School gifted program in order to ensure diversity of the participants' perspectives regarding the issue of academic performance in gifted programs. Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School has been a recognized site for gifted programming by the county and state through their 2007 invitational participation in the Florida State review of gifted programming and their participation on the educational plan review board in 2010.

The gifted coordinator read a scripted introduction of the study (Appendix J) to the participants as a group in a closed meeting room. Additionally, each participant was sent an informational flyer (Appendix J) as a reminder of the study via e-mail one and two weeks following the initial meeting. At the initial contact with the gifted coordinator, the participant received a participant parent consent and assent letters (Appendix K) and permission letter (Appendix L) that explained the purpose of the study, the possible implications of the study for future gifted programming, and the furtherance

of the development of gifted female students. The participants and parents who agreed to participate returned the letters to the coordinator. Students who opted to participate received a link to the fifteen-minute Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA) online. Students who completed the SPPA were then invited to participate in a follow-up interview in the second phase of the study by selecting the “option to continue” at the end of SPPA online, made available through Survey Monkey.

The selected interview participants agreed to participate as indicated by choosing the “option to continue” on the SPPA online. The researcher identified a representative sample of nine students from multiple grades and varied groups (ethnicities) to equal more than twenty percent of the quantitative sample group from phase one. Of these nine participants, four were White, two in ninth grade and two in tenth grade; three were Black, two in ninth grade and one in 10th grade; and two were Hispanic, both in tenth grade. The researcher utilized a random selection process to the extent that was possible. The interviews were conducted face-to-face using a semi-structured question format approach to individual interviewing. This approach ensured that each participant in the research study experienced the same line of questioning (Patton, 2002). Additionally, the structure allowed the researcher to add or subtract questions determined by the participants’ responses as well as to explore emergent themes.

Instrumentation and Materials

Permission to use the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA) was obtained from Dr. Susan Harter, creator of the instrument (Appendix C). The SPPA was specifically designed to identify areas of competency in nine specific domains of self-

concept (Appendix D) and to provide information about the adolescent's self-satisfaction. The nine domains include Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance, Athletic Competence, Physical Appearance, Job Competence, Romantic Appeal, Behavioral Conduct, Close Friendship, and Global Self-Worth. The three subscales to measure salient constructs of adolescence are Romantic Appeal, Job Competence, and Close Friendship (Appendix E). Designed for the general population of adolescents, the SPPA was administered to gifted females in grades 9 through 12. The scale used a structured alternative format in which participants chose the description the “teenager most like me” (two choices) and then indicated whether the description is “sort of true” or “really true” for them. On a scale from one to four, where four represents high self-perception of ability and one represent low self-perception of ability each item was scored. The internal reliability of the SPPA has acceptable values on the Cronbach alpha values ranging from .68 to .93 (Rudasill & Callahan, 2008).

Participants who elected to be interviewed provided upon completion of the Harter Profile, their names, telephone numbers, and /or e-mail. (Appendix F). The semi-structured interview questions consisted of 10 generic questions asked of all interviewees and 5 specific questions based on domains of the participants' results on the SPPA (Appendix G). All questions followed the same format allowing for a structure but also allowing participants to contribute meaning through opened ended responses. Permission to audio record the interviews was requested (Appendix H) from the participants and their parents. The researcher supplemented the audiotapes with additional handwritten notes taken and transcribed by the researcher.

Data Collection/Procedures

Permission to Conduct Study

Permission to conduct the study was granted by Barry University Institutional Review Board (IRB), July 29, 2010. Permission to conduct the study was granted by Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Institutional Review Board, September 29, 2010. The researcher also formally met with the principal and the gifted program coordinator at the school and proposed the study to obtain their permission to invite females enrolled in the gifted program to participate. With the approval of Barry University and M-DCPS Institutional Review Boards, the principal (Appendix I) and gifted coordinator (Appendix J) of Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School, the study commenced with the gifted female students enrolled at Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School during the 2010-2011 academic year.

Dissemination of Permission Letters

From the potential gifted female students at the school, students (Appendix K) and parents of eligible participants (Appendix L) received a letter requesting their permission to participate in the study. To avoid coercion, no teachers, including the researcher, who is a teacher in the gifted program, distributed the student permission or parent letter; rather the gifted coordinator of the gifted program disseminated the letter. Upon student and parental approval, the student participant had access to the online version of the SPPA with or without the option to interview.

Online Instrument

Directions were provided on the first page of the online instrument. The second page included the demographic information, followed by a practice sample question (Appendix D). Potential participants completed the SPPA in the allotted three weeks, which took each individual no more than 15 minutes to complete from start to finish. Potential participants received participation reminders by the gifted coordinator. Through the following protocols no captured IP addresses and no names or contact information except from those interviewed was maintained. The SPPA was disseminated through Survey Monkey, the online survey tool. Each submission systematically collected the responses and numbered them for the collection of results from each participant. In an electronic folder, the collected data were placed for each participant.

Participant Interviews and Transcriptions

After three weeks and the completion of the analysis of all SPPA's, a selected sample group of multiple grades and groups (ethnicities) were interviewed totaling twenty-two percent of the overall number of all SPPA's. The researcher conducted interviews for 30 minutes during school hours in the school library. A professional transcriber executed the transcription of each interview. Transcriptions and tapes were secured in separate locked files in the researcher's home office and were destroyed upon completion of the study. The coded student responses and patterns were categorized by themes for analysis and interpretation

Processes to Ensure Valid/Dependable and Reliable/Credible Results

Ensuring Validity

Ensuring validity in a mixed methods study can follow several procedures to minimize the potential threat to the validity of the research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). To address threats to validity in this mixed methods study the researcher ensured that only students who completed the SPPA became part of the interview phase. The two data sources served to check the consistency of findings generated by the two methods of data collection. Furthermore, by selecting a representative sample in regards to age and group (ethnicity) of students to participate in the SPPA, any potential threats to validity were eliminated. Qualitative questions derived from the quantitative results of the participants' SPPA ensured validity.

Ensuring Dependable and Credible Results

The complementary nature of further investigating the higher domain scores in the range of domains by creating question stems to develop the interview questions assisted in determining whether the data results were representative. The researcher made both inductive and deductive conclusions from all the data available in the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The two research components ensured inference quality through design quality and interpretative rigor (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). The standards imposed for the evaluation of the methodological rigor included the instrument in the study, the participant sample, and participants' responses on both the SPPA and the interview. The instrument ensured rigor in the study by providing the degree of information on the competence score in the different domains of self-perception while

maximizing the range of competence of the gifted female. The range of students included in the sample and the multiple coders in the interpretive phase of the study secured the interpretative rigor. The participant sample provided the full range available with the data analysis to supply relevant themes and patterns, and maximize the use of data to support the results. Additionally, the participants selected for the interviews included a wide range of students with significant scores in a range of domains in the study in order to recognize influences within the representative population (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Multiple coders in the study served to provide for both inter-rater reliability and intra-rater reliability coding. The additional coder included to code in the study was a teacher of the gifted with 15 years of experience teaching, as well as a teacher at the study school. To minimize bias, the researcher used an experienced teacher of the gifted educator to code. Included in Appendix M is the Statement of Confidentiality to analyze the qualitative data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Means and Standard Deviations

The means and standard deviations on the calculated scores of SPPA used identified and examined significant domains of self-perception from the SPPA. Data coded with assigned numeric values assisted in the exploration of the data using descriptive statistics, while the quantitative data for trends and distributions facilitated the examination of the results.

Statistical Analysis

The conducted statistical analysis used the two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) to analyze the patterns and trends of the domain scores and possible factors: grade level, group (ethnicity), or age to determine the degree of relationship between the variables of significant domains, of grade level, group (ethnicity), or age. The domains reviewed are item categories used on the SPPA for adolescence (Harter, 1988).

Interviews and Coding

The interviews were transcribed verbatim by an experienced transcriber from the recorded interviews. The interview responses were labeled as participant identification numbers (1-9). The interviews were then reviewed individually by the researcher. The researcher identified major themes from each of the participant responses to academic performance in the generic questions and the significant domains in the domain specific questions. The individual themes were grouped and categorized to create a label for codes to be used in the coding of each interview. Systematically, the interviews were theme coded by examining words, phrases, and key words to create a code list and definitions. An additional coder coded the interviews with the established codes as set by the researcher. The researcher and the additional coder compared coding decisions and only agreed –upon analysis decisions were accepted by the researcher in order to ensure reliability. Interview responses were categorized as Academic Performance, Scholastic Competence, or Global Self-Worth statements. Because the study focused on the significant domains of self-perception and their impact on academic performance, most of the data utilized were extracted from a few specific questions. These questions are:

1. What is your overall academic average in your required core courses?
2. What has been beneficial, as a gifted female student, to your academic performance and/or self-perception in your school experiences?
3. Do you perceive yourself as a successful gifted student (Why, Why not)?
4. How would you describe yourself academically as a student compared to other students in the general population?
4. How did you get to be _____(fill in item content, e.g. schoolwork, sports, not so good looking?)
5. What happened to make you_____?
6. How do you know that you _____ (fill in item content, e. g.. are good at your school work; don't have friends; act the way you are supposed to; are good-looking?)

Even though most of the data were taken from the responses to the questions listed, it is important to remember that every interview was surveyed for information regarding academic performance and significant domains of self perception.

After all the interviews were coded, items were organized. For each subject, items were separated into nine groups. These groups were responses about the contributor(s), contributions, and the impact of the contribution on academic performance, responses about the contributor(s), contributions, and the impact of the contributions to the Scholastic Competence and Global Self-Worth self-perception domains.

Academic performance. The participant responses were first grouped according to Academic Performance categories. Three Academic Performance categories emerged.

These categories were called contributors to academic performance (those identified to contribute), contribution to academic performance (the contribution made), and impact of contribution to academic performance (the change identified due to the contribution).

Self-perception. After the participant responses had been grouped according to Academic Performance categories, a similar process was used with the self-perception domains. Each domain was coded into three self-perception domain categories. These categories were called contributors to self-perceptions domains (those identified to contribute), contributions to self-perception domains (the contribution made), and impact of contribution to self-perception domains (the change identified due to the contribution) held by each participant.

After all the participant responses had been classified based on grouping codes (Table 1), the responses were examined for patterns and then were interrelated. The findings explained the impact of each significant domain on Academic Performance.

Table 1
Code List

Code	Definition
A	Academic statements
S	Scholastic Competence self-perception statements
G	Global Self-Worth self-perception statements
C1	Person or persons identified as a contributor
C2	Contribution made to participant by contributor
C3	The impact or change made by the contribution to participant

Interpretation of Results

The expected results provided the significant domains of self-perception of gifted females for the given population. In addition, information provided explained the impact of the domains on academic performance. The qualitative data attained helped to explain the quantitative results. The mixed results served to inform and direct the academic programming of the gifted female as well as the support services necessary to promote academic performance of gifted females by teachers, counselors, gifted department chairs, and parents.

Additionally, the strength of the study rested in the mixed methods sequential explanatory design, which allowed for the expansion of quantitative results. The quantitative and qualitative data alone cannot sufficiently capture the necessary details to understand the resultant patterns or tendencies. The researcher collected only one type of data at a time. The researcher conducted the research and managed the study in a clear and straightforward manner without the need for a large team of researchers. The design also lent a strong qualitative set from the quantitative data collection from a validated instrument. Each step of the design imposed and overlapped the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative method, which in turn compensated for the potential weaknesses in each method.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The study used the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescent (SPPA), which is an increasing extension of the Self-Perception Profile for Children (Harter, 1985). The adolescent instrument identifies domain-specific judgments of competence or adequacy in nine separate domains. The instrument recognizes perceptions of Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance, Athletic Competence, Physical Appearance, Behavioral Conduct, and three subscales: Job Competence, Close Friendship, and Romantic Appeal, as well as Global Self-worth. Scholastic Competence is the adolescent's perception of her competence within the area of scholastic performance, which includes class work, and how smart or intelligent a person feels. Social Acceptance is the extent to which the adolescent has peer acceptance, the feeling of being popular, many friends, and is easy to like. Athletic Competence taps into the adolescent's perceptions of athletic ability, competence at sports, and feeling of being good at sports and athletic activities. Physical Appearance refers to the degree to which the adolescent is happy with her looks, body, and feels attractive. Behavioral Conduct includes how one likes her behavior, acts upon doing the right thing, the expected behavior, and does not get into trouble. Job Competence pertains to the degree the teenager feels about her job skills, ready to do well at part-time jobs, and feels one is doing jobs well. Close Friendship taps into one's ability to make close friends, to share personal thoughts and secrets. Romantic Appeal identifies the teenager's perceptions that they are romantically attractive to interested people, date the people they would like to date, and feel fun and interesting to date.

Global Self-Worth is the extent to which the adolescent likes herself, is happy with leading her life and to which she is generally happy. Adolescents discriminate among the domains reporting different levels of competence or adequacy depending upon the domain. Items are scored either 4, 3, 2, or 1, where 4 represents the most adequate self judgment and 1 represent the least adequate judgment. Domain scores in which the Importance Score is 3.0, 3.5, or 4.0 indicate that success is important and will have an impact on general self-esteem (James, 1892). General self-esteem (global self-worth) is the result of the relationship between one's competence and one's aspired competence in an area. According to James, successful domains designated as important to self will produce high self-esteem. Conversely, unsuccessful domains deemed as important by a person will result in low self-esteem. While low importance scores in areas indicate low competence, the adolescent is able to discount an area in which he or she feels inadequate (Harter, 1986). Therefore, the significant domains in the study are those with scores between 3.0, 3.5, or 4.0, or high competence or adequacy.

The purposes of the statistical analyses performed during the study were to: (a) determine the significant (high competence) domains of self-perception in the gifted female high school student; (b) identify patterns and trends between domain scores and other possible factors, such as grade level, group (ethnicity) or age. The qualitative data from the interviews determined how the significant domain scores influenced academic performance.

Findings

The study included 40 of the contacted 150 gifted high school female students (27%) from Dr. Krop Senior High School in Miami Dade County Public Schools during the academic school year 2010-2011. Participants represented female students' ages 14 to 18 years of age, of which 17% were 14 years old, 37% 15 years old, 42% 16 years old, and 3% 18 years old. The participants were in grades nine through twelve in which 38% were in the 9th grade, 60% in 10th grade, and 2% in 12th grade. The 11th graders are not represented in the study due to limited access because of advanced courses at study school. The demographic information on the online SPPA, asked female students to identify the group with which they most identify. The choices included African American/Black, Asian, Caribbean, Hispanic, Hispanic-Nonwhite, Multi-racial, and White (Appendix B). The groups represented in the study included 17% African American/Black, 30% Hispanic, 3% Multi-racial and 50% White. Presented in Table 2 is the demographic information of the study.

Table 2 is the demographic information of the study.

Table 2
Number of subjects in Grade, Age, and Group

9 th Grade								
Age	14				15			
Group	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR
Number	4	2	0	1	5	0	3	0
10 th grade								
Age	15				16			
Group	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR
Number	1	2	4	0	10	2	5	0
12 th grade								
Age	18							
Group	W	B	H	MR				
Number	0	1	0	0				

*Note. Group (Ethnicity), W=White, B= Black, H=Hispanic, and MR= Multiracial.

A comparison of the study sample to the school's gifted program is included in

Table 3.

Table 3

Comparison of Study Sample with Gifted Program Group

Group	Study Sample	Total Gifted Program
	40	322
African American/Black	17%	27%
Hispanic	30%	25%
Multi-racial	3%	3%
White	50%	42%

*Group (Ethnicity)

Descriptive Statistics for High Competent, Significant, Domain Scores

The descriptive statistics of each grade provides the domain score means of the given grade, the high competent, significant, and low competent domains, the complementary score, age, and group (ethnicity) of those domains as displayed in Table 3.

Grade Nine Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics obtained from participants in the 9th grade indicate the domain score means on the SPPA about 2.5. The means for 14 year olds is 2.5. The low competence of 2.1 in 9th grade 14 year olds appears in Physical Appearance, while Scholastic Competence for the group is 3.0. The low competence of 2.1 appears in the group of White 14 year olds and the 3.0 high competence shows in the Multi-racial group.

Additionally, 9th graders in the 15 year old age group show a means of 2.5. The low competence of 2.2 in 9th grade 15 year olds appears in Physical Appearance and

Close Friendship, while Scholastic Competence, Social Acceptance, and Behavioral Conduct is 2.7 for the group. The low competence of 2.2 is in the Hispanic group of 15 year olds for both Appearance and Close Friend and 2.7 in the Hispanic group for all three domains, Conduct, Acceptance, and Scholastic, though only Conduct for the White group. In the 14 and 15 year-olds, Physical Appearance is consistently low competence and Scholastic Competence shows high competence (2.2 and 2.7).

Grade Ten Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for the 10th grade means fluctuates around the value of 2.53, which is the midpoint of the scale. Tenth grade 15 year olds means indicates 2.45. The low competence is at 1.8 in Physical Appearance, while the higher mean subscale of 2.8 appears in Athletic Competence. The low competence of Physical Appearance appears in the White group. The 2.8 mean subscale of Athletic Competence is in the White and Hispanic groups.

The 10th grade 16 year olds means is around 2.62, slightly higher than the midpoint and the 15 year olds. The low competence of 2.1 is in Physical Appearance; conversely, the mean subscale of 2.8 appears in Behavioral Conduct and Job Competence. The low competence of Physical Appearance is in the African American/Black and Hispanic groupings. The low competence of Physical Appearance appears in both 10th grade 15 and 16 year olds, which is also a low competence for 9th graders.

Grade Twelve Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for the 12th grade means is the highest amongst the grade levels at 2.68, which is above the midpoint of the scale. The low competence for the 12th grade 18 years old is 2.2 in Physical Appearance, while the high competence, significant mean subscale is in Scholastic Competence. The low competence appears in the Multi-racial group. The significant competence of Scholastic Competence is in the Multi-racial grouping. Again, Physical Appearance is a low competence in all three grade levels and ages (Table 4).

Table 4

Subscale Means of Sample by Grade, Age, and Group

Age	9 th Grade								10 th Grade								12 th Grade			
	14				15				15				16				18			
Group	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR
Scholastic	2.7	2.9	---	3.0	2.7	---	2.7	---	2.2	2.6	2.6	---	2.6	2.6	2.7	---	---	3.0	---	---
Athletic	2.5	2.8	---	2.2	2.7	---	---	---	2.8	2.5	2.8	---	2.7	2.6	2.6	---	---	2.6	---	---
Acceptance	2.7	2.4	---	2.2	2.6	---	2.7	---	2.4	2.6	2.6	---	2.5	2.6	2.6	---	---	3.0	---	---
Close Friend	2.2	2.4	---	2.2	2.3	---	2.2	---	2.0	2.3	2.1	---	2.2	2.3	2.2	---	---	2.4	---	---
Romance	2.5	2.9	---	2.8	2.5	---	2.6	---	2.4	2.2	2.7	---	2.6	2.7	2.5	---	---	2.8	---	---
Appearance	2.1	2.3	---	2.2	2.3	---	2.2	---	1.8	2.4	2.2	---	2.3	2.1	2.1	---	---	2.2	---	---
Conduct	2.7	2.7	---	2.4	2.7	---	2.7	---	2.2	2.6	2.7	---	2.5	2.7	2.8	---	---	2.8	---	---
Job Comp	2.6	2.4	---	2.2	2.6	---	2.4	---	2.6	2.5	2.7	---	2.5	2.7	2.8	---	---	2.6	---	---
Self Worth	2.9	2.8	---	2.8	2.6	---	3.0	---	2.4	2.6	2.7	---	2.5	2.6	2.7	---	---	2.8	---	---

Note. Ethnicity: Group (Ethnicity), W=White, B= Black, H=Hispanic, and MR=Multiracial. The dashes-- represent no student to provide a mean score.

Standard Deviations by Group

The majority of standard deviations fall between .11 and .28. The lowest deviation appears in the White group at .0 to .25. The Hispanic group is slightly higher with a range of deviation from .0 to .34. The greatest deviation shows in the African American/Black group with a range of .0 to .42. The range in standard deviations indicates there is a considerable variation among individuals (Table 5).

Table 5

Subscale Standard Deviations of Sample by Grade, Age, and Group

Age	9 th Grade								10 th Grade								12 th Grade			
	14				15				15				16				18			
Group	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR	W	B	H	MR
Scholastic	.10	.42	---	---	.29	---	.11	---	---	.28	.16	---	.25	.28	.29	---	---	---	---	---
Athletic	.25	.56	---	---	.10	---	.11	---	---	.14	.19	---	.13	.00	.08	---	---	---	---	---
Acceptance	.11	.00	---	---	.17	---	.11	---	---	.28	.16	---	.30	.28	.26	---	---	---	---	---
Close Friend	.00	.00	---	---	.26	---	.00	---	---	.14	.15	---	.23	.14	.21	---	---	---	---	---
Romance	.11	.14	---	---	.21	---	.20	---	---	.28	.34	---	.15	.42	.16	---	---	---	---	---
Appearance	.11	.14	---	---	.22	---	.11	---	---	.28	.28	---	.21	.14	.08	---	---	---	---	---
Conduct	.11	.14	---	---	.36	---	.34	---	---	.28	.20	---	.23	.14	.08	---	---	---	---	---
Job Comp	.16	.28	---	---	.14	---	.30	---	---	.14	.10	---	.21	.14	.21	---	---	---	---	---
Self Worth	.30	.00	---	---	.17	---	.30	---	---	---	.11	---	.14	.28	.38	---	---	---	---	---

Note. Group (Ethnicity): W=White, B=Black, H =Hispanic, and MR=Multiracial. The dashes--- represents a student with no standard deviation one student.

What specific domains of self-perception are significant in the gifted female high school student? The subscale means across the samples shown in Table 4.3 indicate high competence in Scholastic Competence followed closely by Global Self-Worth. In contrast, Physical Appearance competence has the lowest ratings. Close Friendship Competence is the next lowest domain. The significant, high competence domains in the gifted female student are therefore Scholastic and Global Self-Worth Competence.

Factorial Analysis of Variance Analysis

The researcher chose the two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test for a difference among two or more groups in terms of one dependent variable. The two-way ANOVA is powerful because it provides for two independent variables to be analyzed at once as well as the effects of the interaction. Additionally, the test provides for a strong and efficient research design. The test produces a stronger set of data for the most effective analysis. The researcher used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, SPSS Version 19. The data were first inputted in the variable view of the SPSS 19 for grade (9, 10, 12), group (ethnicity) (African American, Hispanic, Multi-racial, and White), age (14, 15, 16, and 18) and the nine domains with their values. The first analysis used the two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) to examine how the significant dependent variable, Scholastic Competence, affects each of the independent variables which were grade and age for the gifted female high school student. In the second analysis the two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) determined how the dependent variable, Scholastic Competence, affects each of the independent variables, group (ethnicity), and age, for the gifted female high school student.

What patterns and trends emerge regarding domain scores, of the possible factors to include grade level, ethnicity, or age, in the gifted-female high school student? Tables 4.5 and 4.6 represent the dependent variable, Scholastic Competence, with the varying independent variables, grade and age and group (ethnicity) and age, respectively. The tables include the sum of the squares, degrees of freedom (*df*), the mean square, F ratio, and the significance (*Sig*). The first column shows the sources that are included in the model, which compares the independent variables, grade, age, and group (ethnicity) to the dependent variable Scholastic Competence. The second column, the sum of the squares represents to what degree the data varies in the sample, while the third column, the degrees of freedom (*df*) represents the number that is free to vary within the sample and the dimensionality of the variables. The fourth column is the mean square and value which represents how much a category varies between its sum of squares and degrees of freedom. In the fifth column, the *F* ratio tests the interaction between two independent variables with $p = 0.086$ being significant, and the last column lists the significance, *Sig*, which shows the significance of the interaction of the main effects listing the independent variables, group (ethnicity), grade or age. If the *Sig* is less than .05, there is a main effect for that variable. The main effect provides the interaction of the variable.

Table 6

Analysis of Variance for Scholastic Competence by Grade and Age

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Grade	.160	1	.160	2.731	.107
Age	.090	2	.045	.765	.473
Grade * Age	.000	0			

In the first analysis, Scholastic Competence was isolated as, the dependent variable, and the independent variables, Grade and Age using a two-way factorial ANOVA test. By examining the Source, the *F* ratio, and the *Sig* columns in Table 6, the researcher may conclude that the interaction is not significant for Grade x Age. In addition, both Grade and Age main effects are not significant ($F= 2.731, p= .107$; $F=.765, p=.473$). As a result, the Grade or Age of the gifted female student is not significant for a gifted female as regards Scholastic Competence. Moreover, since there is no interaction between Grade and Age, there are no patterns and trends between Scholastic Competence and Grade and Age.

In the second analysis, Scholastic Competence is the dependent variable, and Group (Ethnicity) and Grade are the independent variables using a two-way factorial ANOVA test. By examining the Source, the *F* ratio, and the *Sig* columns in Table 7, the researcher can conclude that the interaction for Group (Ethnicity) x Grade is not significant. In addition, the Group (Ethnicity) and Grade main effects are not significant ($F=.432, p=.732$; $F=2.142, p=.134$). As a result, the Group (Ethnicity) and Grade of the gifted female student is not significant for Scholastic Competence. Moreover, since there

is no interaction between group (ethnicity) and grade, there are no patterns and trends between Scholastic Competence and group (ethnicity) and grade.

Table 7

Analysis of Variance for Scholastic Competence by Group and Grade

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Ethnicity	.081	3	.027	.432	.732
Grade	.267	2	.133	2.142	.134
Ethnicity * Grade	.057	2	.029	.458	.636

In the third analysis, Global Self-Worth was isolated as the dependent variable, and Grade and Age as the independent variables using a two-way factorial ANOVA test. By examining the Source, the *F* ratio, and the *Sig* columns in Table 8, the researcher may conclude that the interaction is not significant for Grade x Age. In addition, both Grade and Age main effects are not significant ($F= 2.074, p= .159$; $F=.032, p=.969$). As a result, the grade or age of the gifted female student is not significant for Global Self-Worth. Moreover, since there is no interaction between Grade and Age, there are no patterns and trends between Global Self-Worth and Grade and Age.

In the fourth analysis, Global Self-Worth was the dependent variable, and Group (Ethnicity) and Grade are the independent variables using a two-way factorial ANOVA test. By examining the Source, the *F* ratio, and the *Sig* columns in Table 9, the researcher may conclude that the interaction is not significant for Group (Ethnicity) x Grade. In addition, Grade main effect is significant ($F= 3.824, p= .033$), while, Group

(Ethnicity) main effect is not significant ($F=2.213$; $p=.106$). As a result, the Group (Ethnicity) is not significant for Global Self-Worth but the Grade is significant as an identified pattern in the gifted female.

Table 8

Analysis of Variance for Global Self-Worth Competence by Grade and Age

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Grade	.126	1	.126	2.074	.159
Age	.004	1	.002	.032	.969
Grade * Age	.00	2			

Table 9

Analysis of Variance for Global Self-Worth Competence by Group and Grade

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Group	.362	3	.121	2.213	.106
Grade	.417	2	.209	3.824	.033
Group * Grade	.019	2	.010	.175	.840

*Group (Ethnicity)

Analysis of the Interviews

How have the significant domains of self-perception most influenced the academic performance of the gifted female high school student? The significant, high competent, domains of the SPPA include Scholastic Competence followed by Global Self-Worth. Scholastic Competence is the adolescents' perception of her competence or ability within the sphere of scholastic performance (Harter, 1986). Global Self-Worth is the extent to which the adolescent likes herself as a person, is content and pleased with the way she is leading her life, and is generally happy the way she is. The categories allowed the researcher to examine the patterns of responses and the definitions of the significant domains from the SPPA. After examining the nine interviews, the researcher identified themes and patterns. After the phrases were identified, the researcher then coded the statements as academic performance statements, Scholastic Competence statements, or Global Self-Worth statements. Coding identified three subcategories for each category, contributor, contributions, and impact on participant. The subcategories allowed the researcher to examine the interaction of the categories and assisted in the examination of the significant domains on the academic performance of the gifted female. To ensure reliability the researcher had the interviews coded by a second educator of the gifted using the established list of codes. The raters then discussed the agreement of the coding of the responses. Academic performance was defined by the participants' disclosed grade or scholastic performance in classes or school. The self-perception codes were defined by the definitions provided in the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents.

Contributors to Academic Performance

Academic performance of the participants was the reported grade, scholastic performance in their classes, or how they are actually performed in their overall school program. Contributors in the study are a person or persons identified by the participant as a contributor to their academic performance. The participants in the study identified four contributors to their academic performance: teachers, the teacher of the gifted, other students, and friends. Participants were asked: What has been beneficial, as a gifted female student, to your academic performance and /or self-perception in your school experiences? Participant Two responded, “Like my gifted teachers... I’d say teachers, students too.” Participant Two went on further to say, “I have a friend who tutors me in math.” Participant Four stated, “Basically I’d have to say knowing I have the confidence in going to my teachers if I have like a problem or something.” Participant Six shared in her interview, “In school probably the support of my friends.”

Contributions to Academic Performance

Contributions included the ways the contributors have assisted or supported the participants’ academic performance. The participants in the study identified the care and concern of teachers, the support of friends through competition, and tutoring as contributions to their academic performance. Participants expressed that teachers are concerned about their academic work and that concern has helped them. Participants specifically pointed out that the teacher of the gifted has helped them. The teacher of the gifted has provided a broad variety in the subject area content and knowledge and challenge in the curriculum. The coursework and classroom experiences in gifted classes

build student confidence that prepares the gifted female for future academic performance. In her interview, Participant Six wholeheartedly expressed, “Definitely the challenge. I’ve heard about advanced and just regular classes and it’s not as challenging and like I want to be challenged and I get that from gifted classes.” In her interview, Participant Nine shared, “Just like the curriculum itself is more challenging which, like, it motivates me to study harder and do better.”

Additionally, friends and others have supported the gifted female by providing tutoring in math, providing notes for class, and creating competition. Challenge and competition contributed by friends have made the gifted female want to do her very best. Participant Six stated, “In school, probably the support of my friend, not only the support but the competition. You want to do as best as you can.”

Impact on Academic Performance

Participants were asked: What is your overall academic average in your required core courses? The participants in the study reported that their academic grade point averages ranged from four points to three points on a one-to-four point scale.

The gifted female participants indicated the impact or change made by the contributions to the academic performance included: the ability to grasp different curriculums and subjects, motivation to study better and to work harder to succeed, and encouragement not to just be smarter, but for more real world tactics. As stated by Participant Nine, “ Because I have been able to grasp the different curriculums and subjects I’ve been learning and, like, over time since freshman year for example I see that I’ve progressed logically. . .” Participants added that the impact of the gifted classes has

influenced them to do better. In the interview, Participant Eight explained, “I feel like I’m with more mature, mature friends, mature people so that kind of like influences me to do better.” Participant Five expressed, “I just think I know more than the average person and that helps a lot. And there are benefits to being a gifted person because in the real world it’s not like being smarter will help you like there’s more tactics.”

Contributors to Scholastic Competence

Scholastic Competence addresses the gifted females’ perceptions of their competence or ability of their scholastic performance. Areas to consider include how well she is doing in class work and how smart or intelligent she feels she is. The participants identified three contributors to their Scholastic Competence: teachers, teacher of the gifted, and parents. As stated by Participant Four, “I would say it’s the teachers because the teachers, like, they help us build up our prior knowledge so without the teachers we wouldn’t have that...” Participant Five clarified that, “Some classes are different from others. It depends on how the teacher teaches.” Teachers overall are contributors to the development of the Scholastic Competence in the gifted female.

Teachers support the gifted female by recognizing their Scholastic Competence and supporting their scholastic growth through academic assistance, recommending further growth in academic coursework, Advanced Placement, and by impelling the gifted female to reach her academic potential and beyond. As a contributor the teacher of the gifted was mentioned often in the interviews as a contributor. Participant Seven shared, “... their teachers aren’t in the level that the teachers teaching the gifted kids are. So there’s just what you learn is different.” Teachers’ support is crucial in supporting

the gifted female to further develop her academic development, as parents are critical contributors for academic monitoring. Participant Eight stated, “I have parents and my own morality is that I have to do well in school.”

Contributions to Scholastic Competence

Participants were asked: How would you describe yourself academically as a student compared to other students in the general population? From the interview responses, the gifted females’ Scholastic Competence comes from continued challenging classroom experiences. As stated by Participant Three, “I think in my academic class I have more of a challenge. I think if I was in a regular class I would, I’m sure, I would get straight A’s, but I would rather try and then get a B in a gifted class than get straight A’s in a regular class.”

The participants in the interviews also cited as contributing factors to Scholastic Competence teaching styles, teacher notes, and how teachers’ teach. Participant One identified, “I just think it’s because the teaching styles I guess are different than in regular maybe that it’s just it works for me. Participant Nine confirmed, “My teachers give me notes even after they go over it in class. I see, like, what I did wrong, what I did right so like overtime practice.” Participant Nine also stated, “I have to pay attention in class. Some classes are different from others. It depends on how the teacher teaches.” The responses showed that teachers served as a positive means of developing Scholastic Competence and experiences.

Impact of Scholastic Competence

Participants were asked: Do you perceive yourself as a successful gifted student (Why, Why not)? The impact of Scholastic Competence in the gifted female is evident in her confidence in her abilities, schoolwork, and grades. Participant Seven shared that “. . . feeling confident. . .” in her abilities affects her grades. The same participant went on to further say, “I guess academically that also sort of ties in with my grades. I do the work and I turn it in and I see receiving good grades so that makes me feel confident in my work and I just strive to make better grades.”

The impact of Scholastic Competence makes the gifted female competitive, motivated, and a diligent worker toward achievement. In her interview Participant Eight said, “I feel as if I do much better than them (other students from the regular program). I feel like if I’m in a competition with a lot of people with everyone in this school and feel like I have to do my best.” Participant Nine states she is “. . . definitely more motivated. . . .and determined.” Participant Six reiterated, “I probably work harder. I give more of an effort.”

Contributors to Global Self-Worth

The teacher contributes to the Global Self-Worth of the gifted female student by contributing to her academic confidence. As stated by one of the participants, “Teachers make me feel confident about my academic ability.” Student responses also affirmed that parents positively influence girls to feel confident to perform academically. Additionally, Participant One stated, “I mean. . . .maybe school because it shows you that...even school...you make friends in school.” The overall responses from the interviews

indicate that the gifted female student is happy and satisfied with self, through her academic confidence, parental affirmation, and the school environment.

Contributions to Global Self-Worth

Participants in the study identified the contributions to Global Self-Worth as school, courses, classes, and positive feedback. Participant Three shared in her interview, “I like this school a lot so I think that helps and I enjoy, like, the courses and I enjoy a lot of my classes so I think that really helps those things.” Participant Seven included that positive feedback serves to be a significant contribution to her Global Self-Worth. The gifted female is encouraged by positive interactions with others, friendships, challenging coursework, and choices in school, which are ways the gifted female can practice and affirm her Global Self-Worth.

Impact of Global Self-Worth

The impact of Global Self-Worth as reported by the participants, is a gifted female student who is happy and confident possesses a positive attitude. She is able to accomplish a goal, thereby feeling fulfilled. Participant Nine stated, “Achieving a goal provides accomplishment. I am happy when I accomplish a goal, fulfillment.” Her confidence precedes her and allows her to maximize her efforts to succeed in her endeavors. As stated by Participant Six, “I feel confident, I guess, in what I do ‘cause I try to put my maximum effort.”

Merging the Interview Responses and SPPA Results

In what ways do the interview responses explain the SPPA results of the gifted female high school student? First, the researcher calculated the average of each of the

domain scores as displayed in Table 10. Then, the averages of the domain scores were merged with the interview themes and responses to explain the results of the SPPA Profile in order to answer the fourth research question.

As shown on Table 10, Physical Appearance competence had the lowest of the domain scores at 2.18. Using the definition as ascribed by the instrument, “The adolescent is happy with the way she looks, likes her body, and feels she is good looking.” The question from the interview asked the interviewee: What makes you happy with your Physical Appearance, or the way you look? Responses from the question included the following from Participant Two-“I feel more comfortable socially because I can dance and that helps. Participant Four stated, “I don’t put stuff on just to be impressed . . . to impress other kids...I wear it for myself, fulfillment.” Participant Nine emphasized in her interview, “. . . because it’s like not only about looks it’s about personality and I think that’s what I see in myself.” Going on to further she stated, “I’ve heard from friends that my sense of humor, personality were good.”

The collective responses refer to dance, personality, sense of humor and confidence as evidences that the gifted female is happy. None of the girls felt comfortable to identify any internal reason or personal satisfaction for their happiness. Physical Appearance is dependent on others in the gifted female student, which is not a factor easily controlled by self; represented by the low score on the profile.

Table 10
SPPA Domain Score Averages

Domain	Score
Appearance	2.18
Close Friend	2.23
Job Comp	2.55
Social Acceptance	2.57
Romantic	2.60
Athletic	2.61
Behavioral Conduct	2.62
Global Self-Worth	2.68
Scholastic	2.69

Another low domain is Close Friendship, with a 2.23 average. Close friendship is defined as “One’s ability to make close friends.” The question from the interview asked the interviewee- “How do you know you can have Close Friendships?” Responses from the question include: “ trustworthy personality, friendships recent, overtime, longtime friendships since elementary, share similarities in personalities, outgoing, getting involved, funny, make friends easily, personality, large groups of a variety of friends, little group strong, open minded more new friends naturally, more social strike up conversations, friends through the years.” Clearly, the responses indicate the importance of personality dictating the ability for one to have friendships. Another observation that is evident are the distinct characteristics of those who have friends, are outgoing, social, trustworthy, open minded, and undoubtedly prior experiences with friendship from early

on. Therefore, a gifted female who does not have any of these characteristics would likely believe that Close Friendships are not possible or available for them.

Consequently, Close Friendships can fall out of the area of control for the gifted female student. Therefore, classes or programs are not guarantees for Close Friendships, but something one cannot completely control, which can explain why this area might display as low on the domain scores. The added venture of having similar classes or programs with friends can assist in this area of struggle for the gifted female, giving her places to not only grow academically, but also socially.

The domain average for Job Competence is at 2.55. The Profile defines Job Competence as, "Job skills, is ready to do well at part-time jobs, and feels that one is doing well at the jobs she has." The interview question asked- How do you know you can do a job well? The responses of the interviewees' are rich with prior experiences, from babysitting to camp counselor, even the exchanges within the school organization with e-mailing teachers to helping in a family boutique business. From these experiences, the interviewees expressed that the job affirmed their beliefs about themselves, "Responsible, dedicated, presentable, and positive attitude," and fostered their own job skills growth. Selection for a job indicated not only their personal worth as a worker, but also the viability and attractiveness of their skills to employers. Even though most of the girls' interviews had limited practice with an actual job or experiences, unanimously, the gifted females expressed confidence and assurance that they have what it takes to get a job and be successful in its requirements. Practice and actual job experiences are not the reasons for job success or failure for the gifted female, but rather confidence and the assured

awareness of abilities. This confidence could explain why this score ranks higher than the two previously discussed domains, but not in the top ranking of domains.

Social Acceptance in the Profile is termed as, “Accepted by peers, feel popular, have a lot of friends, and feel they are easy to like.” The SPPA Profile results indicate the gifted female in the study scored 2.575 in this area. The question asked- How do you know you are popular or accepted by your friends? From the interviews, it was very clear that none of the girls considered themselves popular or that they have many friends. The girls, across the interviews, did not consider themselves popular, but “students know me” and “known by people” were their responses. The girls were content and satisfied with this observation. Another universal response, friends were close and accepting, additionally, the confidence to make friends came from the acceptance of the friends they presently have in their lives. Popularity clearly was not a priority, but friendships are important in a small group, which explains the midrange of the results, and not a high competence.

Romantic Appeal classified as, “Romantically attractive to those in whom they are interested, are dating the people they would like to be dating, and feel that they are fun and interesting to date.” The interview question asked- How do you know that you are romantically attractive to those you are interested in? Romantic Appeal average is 2.6, slightly above the midpoint range. Romantic Appeal is another domain with which the girls in the interview had no experience. Initially, girls felt uncomfortable about dating and expressed that they had never dated or even had anyone in mind. Their responses focused on the fact that their personalities were appealing and made them

capable of having a relationship. Additional comments came from their male friends making them feel comfortable and confident. The explained average is not by experience, but by their confidence expressed in personality.

Athletic Competence is termed as “Athletic ability and competence.” The interview question asked- How do you know you have athletic ability? Athletic Competence average came in at 2.61. Across all the interviews, the girls were actively involved in sports and had been for a long time. Those who were presently not involved had been and had demonstrated a natural ability in athletic competence. Another observation in the interviewee responses was the wide variety of sports in which the girls engaged from dance to professional swimming. Sports seemed to be a very important part of their lives and in the lives of friends and in family traditions, which explains why this domain is above the average.

Behavioral Conduct in the Profile assessed “The degree in which one likes the way one behaves, does the right thing, acts the way one is supposed to, and avoids getting into trouble.” The question used in the interview, “What is the main reason for why you act the way you are supposed to?” Behavioral Conduct average is 2.62. With confidence and pride, the girls in the interview all attributed this to family, specifically parents. Family made them feel comfortable, confident, while instilling a belief system that gave advice, codes of conduct, and necessary discipline for reinforcement. Girls raised properly and guided in their lives expressed satisfaction and an appreciation of a teacher’s influence in the classroom contributes to their Behavioral Conduct. The continued support in Behavioral Conduct easily made this a stronger domain.

Global Self-Worth, one of the significant domains in the study at 2.68, is defined in the SPPA as, “Likes oneself as a person, is happy the way one is leading one’s life, and is generally happy with the way one is.” The interview question asked, “What happened to make you happy about the way you are leading your life?” The responses to this question centered on maximizing effort, happy when a goal was accomplished, fulfillment, school choices, and classes helping, and an overall positive attitude about life. Students associated happiness with accomplishing goals they set for themselves. Clearly, the girls in the interviews understood how to be and achieve their personal happiness.

Scholastic Competence is the most significant of the domains in the study with an average domain score of 2.69. Scholastic Competence is termed as “Competence or ability within the realm of scholastic performance (how well she is doing in class work and how smart or intelligent one feels one is).” In the interviews interviewees were asked- “How did you get to be competent in your scholastic performance?” Girls referred to three major areas: feedback from teachers, background knowledge and building on prior skills, and academic schoolwork.

Summary

This chapter addressed the four research questions from the study by using descriptive statistics, two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA), and qualitative interviews. The results of the SPPA identified the significant or high competence domains: Scholastic Competence and Global Self-Worth. The examination of patterns and trends indicated that Global Self-Worth is significant in grade only, but not in age and group (Ethnicity). Grade, age, and group (ethnicity) do not have interaction effects

Scholastic Competence. The responses from the qualitative interviews were used to examine the influence of the significant domains on the academic performance of the gifted female participant. Three subcategories, contributor, contributions, and impact, of Academic Performance, Scholastic Competence, and Global Self-Worth in the qualitative interviews allowed for further examination of the impact of the significant domains on the gifted female academic performance. Additionally, the interview responses examined explained the domain averages on the SPPA, which consistently supported Scholastic Competence as above the midrange, while Physical Appearance is low competence for the gifted female student.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter describes the purposes, procedures, statistical analyses, and interview results of the research study. A discussion of the findings and conclusions is included, as well as the recommendations for action and implications for future research.

Summary of Study

This study examined the relationship of academic self-perception and performance of gifted adolescent females as impacted by educational opportunities and the educational environment. Education for the gifted has been included in Florida State law since 1968 under Florida's Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Program. The U.S. Congress passed the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (Elementary & Secondary Education Subpart 6-Gifted and Talented Students .SEC. 5461, 1988). The act provided \$8 million for the identification and servicing of gifted students, the professional development, curriculum, and training of teachers, and the creation of a National Center for the Education of the Gifted (Heward, 1996). Despite the opportunity made available through legislation and state funding, the educational system continues to fail to meet the needs of gifted females on local, state, and national levels (Sadker, Sadker, & Zittleman, 2009).

The review of the literature identified the evolution of current gifted identification mechanisms, current conceptions of giftedness (a basis for the study) and the identity development of the gifted female (Gilligan, 1982). The barriers to achievement in the

gifted girl can be both external and internal. External barriers are societal barriers such as society's views of femininity. Families and schools that do not recognize the giftedness of girls by their not being acknowledged or identified cannot accommodate the needs of the gifted female or provide services for her potential (Navan, 2009). As a result, gifted girls who are not identified and supported in their potential can become isolated and helpless (Adams, 1996; Lovecky, 1996; Sands & Howard-Hamilton, 1995). Society's attitude about the academic potentiality of girls and acceleration can become another obstacle. The self-perception and self-confidence of gifted girls declines over their academic careers and oftentimes girls will disguise their abilities. Unchallenging and hostile school environments become additional barriers to gifted girls. From birth, girls are socialized to believe career choice must include both career and family. The gifted female must have an understanding of her high sensitivity and over excitabilities. The need for the gifted female to develop through relationships and to set high academic and career goals places her at risk of not accomplishing her gifted potential relationships and can aid or hamper her success (Navan, 2009). Some of the significant characteristics to develop in the gifted females include: early career education, the vital influence of parents, educators, mentors, and role models, underachievement, and assistance in affective and emotional development (Navan, 2009). Current studies of the gifted female focus on the characteristics and barriers of gifted girls. Studies indicate that there is a high percentage of gifted girls in advanced programs, such as gifted and the Advanced Placement programs, but national test scores show that girls score significantly lower than their male counterparts on national tests. Additionally, several studies have

indicated that gifted girls are a diminishing population in high school, but a growing population of college graduates in the social sciences. Considering the present research, the need to further investigate the gifted female beyond her placement in advanced programs and societal barriers is a necessary requirement. Families face the daunting task of insurmountable barriers from required program requirements and test scores, to the relational needs of the gifted female, while educating and supporting their advanced knowledge. Despite the current research, few studies have investigated the impact of self-perception on academic performance for the high school gifted female or interviewed high school gifted female students to add to the body of knowledge about how to support, expand and enrich their academic potentials.

This study used a mixed methods sequential explanatory design, a mixed methods approach with two distinct phases of data collection and analyses. The research design allowed the collection of quantitative data in the initial phase to inform the qualitative data collection in the second phase and for the qualitative data to explain the results of the quantitative data analyses (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Therefore, the study began with the quantitative collection of data from the nine domains on the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA) results, followed by the analysis of those data. By examining the means and standard deviations, the results of the analyzed SPPA data were used to determine the high competence domains (significant). Means that are on the high end of the scale (1 to 4) are considered high competence domains (significant) according to the Harter instrument. The factorial ANOVA test revealed the patterns and trends of the domain scores, of the possible factors, including

grade level, group (ethnicity), or age. Participants for the qualitative interviews were selected from among the quantitative SPPA sample. A semi-structured interview format was used to interview the selected participants. Finally, results from these two data sources, the SPPA and the interviews, were merged in order to create a comprehensive explanation of gifted high school females' perceptions of their academic selves.

The conducted research study was executed during the 2010-2011 school year to include the gifted female students enrolled in the gifted program at Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. An invited purposeful sample of one hundred fifty gifted female high school students participated in the study. The purposeful sample included gifted female students in grades 9 through 12. Forty of the one hundred fifty participants of the purposeful sample were selected from multiple grades and of various groups (ethnicities) from the gifted program to ensure diverse participant perspectives on the issue of academic performance in gifted programs.

The conducted data analyses used descriptive statistics and a two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program (2010). The first analysis examined the means of each domain (scholastic, athletic, acceptance, close friend, romance, appearance, conduct, job competence, and self-worth) on the SPPA for the 9th grade 14 and 15 year olds, 10th grade 15 and 16 year olds, and the 12th grade 18 year olds and groups (African American/Black, Hispanic, White and Multi-racial). The analysis determined the means for the 9th grade at 2.5 for both 14 and 15 year olds, 2.53 for 15 year olds in the 10th grade, 2.62 for 16 year olds in the 10th grade, 2.68 for 18 year olds in the 12th grade. The

first analysis also determined the standard deviation across the groups. The lowest deviation appeared in the White group from .0 to .25, then the Hispanic group from .0 to .34 with the greatest deviation in the African American/Black group with a range of .0 to .42.

The second analysis determined the significant, high competence domains across all the grades, ages, and groups using the subscale means. The subscale means indicated high competence in Scholastic Competence and Global Self-Worth

The third analysis, using the two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA), examined how the independent variables, grade, and age influenced the dependent variable, Scholastic Competence. The fourth analysis using the two-way factorial analysis of variance examined how group (ethnicity), grade, independent variables, influence the dependent variable, Scholastic Competence. Both analyses determined that none of the variables was significant in Scholastic Competence.

The fifth analysis using the two-way factorial analysis of variance examined how Global Self-Worth, the dependent variable, affected the independent variables, grade, and age. The sixth analysis using the two-way factorial analysis of variance examined how the independent variables, grade, and group (ethnicity), impacted Global Self-worth. The variable grade was significant in Global Self-Worth competence.

The interviews were analyzed to examine how the significant domains of Self-Perception, Scholastic Competence, and Global Self-Worth most influenced the academic performance of the gifted female high school student. The analyzed interviews examined three categories: Academic Performance, Scholastic Competence, and Global Self-Worth

as well as three subcategories within each category: contributor, contribution, and impact. The analyzed interviews revealed that contributors that influence Academic Performance across the significant domains included parents, teachers, other students, and friends. The contributions to Academic Performance from the significant domains identified challenging classes, the care and concern of teachers, the support of friends through competition and tutoring, and teacher feedback. The overall impact of the significant domains on the Academic Performance as identified by the participants included confidence in her abilities and schoolwork, acquired academic skills, motivations to study better and to work more diligently to succeed, and accomplishing goals.

The two data sources, the results of the SPPA and the interviews, were merged by examining the high competence domains, Scholastic Competence and Global Self-Worth, and then using the interviews of those domains to explain the scores of those domains. The interviews revealed the realities of the gifted female high school student. The interview realities allowed for both the affirmations and concerns of the gifted female in both competencies.

Limitations

The research had several limitations, which impinged on the study. The sample group was invited to participate through the gifted chairperson who must fulfill several roles at the school site including program specialist, coordinator of gifted services, and School Accreditation Committee chair, to name a few. Additionally, school scheduling would only permit the chair to speak to students in elective courses and not in advanced courses at the school. The older participants, the 11th and 12th graders, who could have

participated had at least four to five advanced courses, making them unavailable for participation. Once contacted, the participants were required to return the necessary permission forms in order to participate. The return of the permission forms was sporadic and at times had to be disseminated several times before they were returned. Some participants opted to complete the online SPPA at the school site during an available time, but often ran into the problem of computer access because other students were using available computers.

Discussion of Findings

The first research question tested confirmed that the high competent, significant domains of self-perception were Scholastic Competence and Global Self-Worth. The descriptive statistics obtained for the means of the subscale domains across the sample indicate that overall Physical Appearance is consistently low competence. The subscale means across the participants indicate that the significant (high competence) domains in the gifted female student are, therefore, Scholastic Competence and Global Self-Worth.

Scholastic Competence as significant (high competence) may have resulted because the curriculum in the gifted program includes a focus on enrichment and acceleration. Enriching curricular experiences are expected both inside and outside of the classroom to provide learners with opportunities to learn the required content on grade level, to foster depth of content knowledge, and new areas of interests “creative productivity” (Renzulli and Reis, 1976). Acceleration refers to the pacing of the curriculum in order to proceed at a more rapid pace for the gifted learner and a higher level of content to meet the curricular needs of the precocious learner. Moreover, the

teacher of the gifted is state certified through required coursework that includes developing an appropriate curriculum of challenge and enrichment for the gifted learner. In addition, according to the systems model, gifted development is dependent upon psychological processes that are operating simultaneously. Joseph Renzulli's *Three Ring Conception of Giftedness* considers that specific abilities, task commitment, and creativity are functions of the contextual situation (Renzulli, 2002). Specific ability, the capacity to acquire knowledge or skill to perform in a specialized area, developed in the curriculum and instruction through enrichment methods and materials that promote the development of thinking and feeling processes. Additionally, a need of a special program beyond the grade level is a component, which initiates identification into the gifted program. Students in the gifted program have potential, exhibit intellectual capacity, and demonstrate the ability to perform at high levels of accomplishment. The U.S. Department of Education (1993) outlines these identifiable characteristics: potential, capacity, and ability as a gifted learner. Therefore, considering both the curriculum and the identification process, it is clear that the strongest area of the gifted learner is their Scholastic Competence. Furthermore, the major area consistently developed is a curriculum that is appropriate for gifted learners to meet their academic needs.

The subscale means across the participants also indicated Global Self-Worth as significant (high competence). Global Self-Worth, according to the domain scale, is being happy with oneself and the way one is leading one's life. Gifted learners possess what is termed as entelechy in the research. Entelechy employed can motivate the gifted individual toward realizing her fullest potential. It is why the gifted individual seems to

have within herself a will to strive for something higher. Gifted individuals with entelechy are single-minded, self-willed, highly motivated, and single-focused (Lovecky, 1993). Entelechy is an internal motivation of the gifted individual. Additionally, Maslow's hierarchal theory of human needs (1943) states that a person will strive to reach the highest levels of his or her abilities. The single minded and self-willed gifted learner is internally motivated to consistently strive to become all he or she is capable of becoming, termed as self-actualization by Maslow. Furthermore, during the interviews, the participants' responses to the questions regarding Global Self-Worth centered on maximizing their effort to achieve and accomplish a goal. The participants unanimously expressed fulfillment and happiness with goals they had set for themselves and the goals set for them by their teachers for them. The school provided curricular choices or options, which aided in fulfilling their predetermined goals. According to one interviewee, "School provides the choices I need to get the classes I want. The classes I take better prepare me for my future." Several participants stated, "I have a good life. I keep a positive attitude." Overall, the participants had a positive attitude about their lives because they were able to accomplish and fulfill their goals. One participant stated, "I am happy when I accomplish the goals I have set for myself. I feel fulfillment." One self-willed participant stated, "Because of the maximum effort I put forth I can accomplish my goals." All of these responses are in fact evidence of entelechy. Students associated happiness with accomplishing goals they set for themselves.

The results from the second research question tested confirmed only one pattern from among age, grade or group (ethnicity) in the competent domain scales, Scholastic

Competence and Global Self-Worth. The two-way factorial analysis of variance did not find the variables of age, grade, or group (ethnicity) to influence significantly the scholastic competence. Scholastic Competence is not affected by the age, grade or group of any of the participants. The two-way factorial analysis of variance did find the variable of grade significant in Global Self-Worth, but the variables age and group (ethnicity) are not significant. This suggests that the gifted female regardless of group (ethnicity) will be more satisfied and self-directed with grade. Overall subscale means indicated that the 12th grade participant had the highest Global Self-Worth across the grades; indicating that as a student matures they feel more confident.

The third research question tested confirmed Academic Performance is influenced by Scholastic Competence and Global Self-Worth as identified in the three subcategories, contributors, contributions, and impact. The analysis of the interviews indicated that the interactions of contributors, parents, teachers, teacher of the gifted, other students, and friends, influence the participants' Academic Performance. It is the participants' interactions with others that provided affirmation and acceptance of her abilities confirmed in the study and research by Navan (2009). As confirmed in the qualitative interviews the participants' relationships are essential to their development while high academic goals aid in making them successful (Navan, 2009). Parents are important contributors to the gifted female participants as evidenced in such statements as, "My mother she built that foundation for me to know it's ok to be different." Caring content area teachers provided a positive influence according to the participant interviews with such statements as, "I think the teachers are more, like, concerned I guess about how you

do and that's helped. . . . my gifted teachers that have helped me. The teachers for sure, because they care so much, they challenge you, and I think the teachers really make the program." Participants stated, "I have a friend who tutors me in math. They help me get my notes done. Most of my friends are in the gifted program." Additionally, the analysis of the interviews indicated that the contributions to the participants as challenging coursework, teaching styles, and school classes. Coursework that is challenging continues to develop the participants in their classes. Participants in the interviews referred, "I want to be challenged, and I get that from gifted classes. I enjoy the courses and I enjoy many of my classes. The gifted program gives me better preparation." Finally, the analysis of the interviews identified confidence in her abilities and schoolwork, the ability to grasp new curriculums and subjects, and a positive attitude as influencing the Academic Competence of the participants. The essential tools of success, support systems and challenging coursework evident confirmed in this study are echoed in the research (Navan, 2009). A powerful determinant in academic performances and subsequent performances is the person's interpretation of the results of their experiences (Bandura, 1997). It is evident that the interpretations of the participants' experiences in the study are a vital determiner to their Academic Performance and continued success.

The results of the fourth research question tested confirmed that the interview responses explain SPPA results of the gifted female high school student. The SPPA results confirmed high competence in Scholastic Competence; the interview responses support the importance and significance of academic competence and performance in the gifted female. The participants in the interviews reported their areas of intelligences and

their academic needs and requirements as students. Participants in the interviews were able to identify the support and the type of interactions they personally experienced in order to perform academically well. In addition, they were very aware of setting both personal and academic goals to achieve and succeed as students in the academic arena. According to the research of Ross & Parker (1980), gifted students universally have higher academics. The participant's responses indicate she was keenly aware of her ability and what it takes to achieve. This was shown in the SPPA results. Academic self-concept has a positive impact upon academic achievement in the gifted student (Plucker & Stocking, 2002). The results of the SPPA and the interviews confirm the confidence of the participants in their abilities and satisfaction in achieving academic goals as set by teachers and themselves. A student's personal beliefs in her abilities can positively influence her academic performance; therefore, academic performance and self-concept mutually influence and determine each other (Marsh, 1990; Alexander, 1997; Castor, 1997). The level of self-concept can determine academic achievement (Fantuzzo, Tighe & Child, 2000). Harter's research suggests that children with internal cognitive processes can achieve and have a high level of self-esteem; this is affirmed with the participants in this study as well.

Implications for Practice

Practical implications of the study should not be considered as the end all for all gifted girls. The research about gifted girls in this study is correlational and descriptive, not causal.

Teacher goals in various forms can serve to empower the gifted female, i. e., expectations, curricular decisions, acceleration and rigor options, and differentiated program options. The teacher's instructional expectations can transform the curriculum to meet the individual needs of the gifted female while also requiring new curricular standards of success. The curricular decisions made by the teacher are both implicit and explicit allowing for the creation of new curricular paths, the exploration of careers, and the development of expertise in a particular field. The teacher as the curriculum leader in the classroom directs the acceleration and rigor options to provide the pacing of the curriculum and the depth of knowledge necessary to move a student to new levels of achievement and confidence. Lastly, teacher goals in the form of differentiated program options are considerate of student needs for growth and the demands required of the curriculum to empower the student to new pathways of learning and interests.

The student at the center of curriculum development dictates how the curriculum will accommodate interests, needs, abilities, learning styles, and standards of learning. At the very center of the curriculum is the student, from which all emanates. The student is actively involved in and responsible for her own learning. The teacher, the content area expert, sees the curriculum as a whole to impart discriminately to the individual student.

Challenging classes develop and advance achievement. Challenging classes seek to provide a depth of knowledge as opposed to a broader curriculum. A challenging curriculum advances student achievement levels because more is both expected of and required by the teacher and the curriculum. Challenging classes require that students

understand, practice, and seek to master the language of the subject, the structures of the subject, and the products created by the subject.

Teachers are modeled mentors, professional experts in a given field. The teacher is the first subject area expert the student may encounter. The teacher can serve as a mentor for student mentorships and possible shadowing opportunities to first introduce a given field, provide real world experiences, and move students towards career choices. It is within the guidelines of the curriculum and the experiential learning experiences in which a student can make informed and lifelong decisions.

The strong influence of positive teacher and student interactions creates classrooms that are more conducive to learning the curriculum and meeting the needs of a student's academic, emotional, and developmental needs. Teachers who have positive interactions with their students are in tune with his or her learning capacities of his or her students' so as to develop the curriculum and adjust instruction. Teacher and student interactions positively influence academic performance and achievement.

Recommendations

In this study the researcher proposes that all gifted girls should have access to the available opportunities that encourage the potentiality of the gifted female over her lifetime through transitioning and counseling services, programming, identification and exiting protocols.

1. The first recommendation based on the results of this study is to support the gifted female in her academic competence by educating her parents, teachers, and other meaningful adults in her life to the changing realities for the changing

environment of high school and the gifted female student in a high school setting. Presently, the gifted female student arrives at the high school already earmarked to go into the gifted program. She will then receive gifted services, which in the study school include gifted honors courses only available for gifted students. No supportive transitioning program or services are available for students or parents as they move into a more challenging school environment. Parents, teachers, and students not only need to be educated and prepared for the transition into high school but also the gifted female student in a high school setting. The student in the gifted program is under the special education program in the school district. In the same program, students with identified learning challenges and cognitive delays are provided with transitioning services for families and teachers to educate and support the student as well as the family. No such programming is available to the gifted student or her family.

2. An additional recommendation based on the results of the interviews of this study is the necessity to create and provide opportunities to develop support mechanisms, such as improved counseling. Since gifted girls drop out of the program more readily in secondary school, all the support mechanisms should be available. These should include independent studies within the curricular areas. Participants in the study often vocalized, “A gifted student in the program doesn’t feel special. There is nothing in particular made available for them except a gifted class.” Participants equally expressed concerns regarding school choices and curricular choices that at times have been limited to only Advanced

Placement course offerings. One of the participants interviewed was taking classes off campus to meet her academic needs. The participant said, “The school didn’t have what I wanted and if you don’t take the advanced placement course you could get placed in an unchallenging course, wasting time.” This student in particular had sought out her own choices. At times, gifted students join another school within the district to accommodate their academic interests to further develop their area of giftedness. Improved counseling would create a supportive environment conducive to meeting the needs of the gifted female throughout her developing teen years. Additionally, this type of support would allow for the expansion of the school curriculum. Oftentimes the counseling services provided at the school conflict with the required services of the program. Gifted students are misplaced into the wrong course and may spend weeks trying to get through the mayhem of schedule changes. Schools should provide a full spectrum of advanced coursework through Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement courses by making partnership agreements with universities.

3. Another recommendation based on the results of this study, and supported in the literature, is to ensure identification of the gifted female to thwart potential isolation and helplessness. The failure of families and schools to recognize the giftedness of girls, either by not acknowledging or identifying them, impedes accommodating the needs of the gifted female or providing services for her potential (Navan, 2009). Additionally, the identification of the gifted female is not sufficient and is limited if girls come in and out of the program without ever

fully developing their potentialities. The students at the study school entered the gifted program after being identified for the gifted program in the middle school. The ongoing identification process does not exist at the study school. Students can receive gifted services through 12th grade, according to the Florida statutes. Gifted services can be initiated anytime in the student's program, even in 12th grade. Girls who have gifted potential but who are not identified in the high school setting, risk being isolated and helpless in their quest to achieve their gifted potentials. The coordinator of the gifted program could provide professional development workshops for teachers to assist them in recognizing the characteristics of the gifted female learner. Professional development could focus on a school-focused approach to supporting the potential of the gifted female. The coordinator could offer consultation services for the gifted female who is not presently enrolled in gifted classes.

Further Research

Further studies with the participants over a five year period can examine changes in their Academic Competence and Global Self-Worth and how additional support mechanisms have benefitted the girls in their gifted potentials. By revisiting the identification process in secondary school for potential gifted females and the exit procedures from the gifted program, one may examine and analyze gifted program retention rates to better perpetuate and further the gifted females' potentials. Additionally, a case study or longitudinal study measuring the success of gifted females and their career choices at the post secondary level, to assess those who participated in

the gifted program in secondary school, and to examine correlations in academic performance, programming, and career choices.

Summary

In summary, discussed were the findings and conclusions of the study. Previous research supports the findings of this study. Recommendations based on the results of this study include providing transitioning services for the family, student, and teacher; improved counseling; revisiting the identification and exiting of gifted females in secondary school. Finally, further studies to examine the Academic Competence and Global Self-Worth of the girls in the study, and a longitudinal examination of the girls who have participated in the gifted program were recommended.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Barry University Internal Review Board Approval



11300 NE Second Avenue
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800-756-6000, ext. 3020
fax 305-899-3026
www.barry.edu

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Research with Human Subjects Protocol Review

Date: July 29, 2010

Protocol Number: 100623

Title: Academic Self Perceptions and Performance of the Gifted Female High School Student

Meeting Date: June 16, 2010

Researcher Name: Ms. Yvette Irizarry
Address: 4925 SW 34th Terrace
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33312

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Victoria Giordano
ADSOE

Dear Ms. Irizarry:

On behalf of the Barry University Institutional Review Board (IRB), I have verified that the specific changes requested by the convened IRB June 16, 2010 have been made.

It is the IRB's judgment that the rights and welfare of the individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected; that the proposed research, including the process of obtaining informed consent, will be conducted in a manner consistent with requirements and that the potential benefits to participants and to others warrant the risks participants may choose to incur. You may therefore proceed with data collection.

As principal investigator of this protocol, it is your responsibility to make sure that this study is conducted as approved by the IRB. Any modifications to the protocol or consent form, initiated by you or by the sponsor, will require prior approval, which you may request by completing a protocol modification form.

It is a condition of this approval that you report promptly to the IRB any serious, unanticipated adverse events experienced by participants in the course of this research, whether or not they are directly related to the study protocol. These adverse events include, but may not be limited to, any experience that is fatal or immediately life-



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OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

Research with Human Subjects
Protocol Review

To: Ms. Yvette Irizarry
4925 SW 34th Terrace
Pt. Lauderdale, Florida 33312

From: Doreen C. Parkhurst, M.D., FACEP
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Date: July 8, 2011

Protocol Number: 110623
Protocol Title: Academic Self Perceptions and Performance of the Gifted
Female High School

Dear Ms. Irizarry:

Thank you for sending the request for modifications indicating that you would like to make a change to your protocol regarding:

1. Change in end date for extension of data collection to August 1, 2012.

The above changes have been accepted. You may proceed with your collection of data. The approval granted expires on August 1, 2012.

Sincerely,

Doreen C. Parkhurst, M.D., FACEP
Chair Institutional Review Board
Associate Dean
Program Director, PA Program
Barry University
Box SGMS
11300 NE 2nd Avenue
Miami Shores, FL 33161

If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Cook at: 305-899-3020

Note: The investigator will be solely responsible and strictly accountable for any deviation from or failure to follow the research protocol as approved and will hold Barry University harmless from all claims against it arising from said deviation or failure.

**APPENDIX B: Miami Dade County Public Schools Internal Review Board
Approval**



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

giving our students the world

Superintendent of Schools
Alberto M. Carvalho

Office of Program Evaluation
Jerome L. Levitt

Miami-Dade County School Board
Dr. Solomon C. Stinson, Chair
Perla Tabares Hantman, Vice Chair
Agustin J. Barrera
Renier Diaz de la Portilla
Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman
Dr. Wilbert "Tee" Holloway
Dr. Martin Stewart Karp
Ana Rivas Logan
Dr. Marta Pérez

EXPEDITED – APPROVAL

September 29, 2010

Ms. Ivette Irizarry
4925 S.W. 34th Terrace
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33312

Dear Ms. Irizarry:

I am pleased to inform you that the Research Review Committee (RRC) of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) has granted you a approval for your request to conduct the study: "The Academic Self Perceptions and Performance of the Gifted Female High School" in order to fulfill the requirements of your dissertation at Barry University.

The approval is granted with the following conditions:

1. Participation of the schools targeted in this study is at the discretion of the principal. Please note that even with the approval of the RRC, it is still the responsibility of the Principal as the gatekeeper of the school to decide whether to participate or not. As stated in the Board rule, *"... the principal of the individual school has the privilege of deciding if RRC-approved research will be conducted within his/her school."*
2. The participation of all subjects (such as students, faculty, or staff) is **voluntary**.
3. The anonymity and/or confidentiality of all subjects must be assured.
4. Active Parent permission and Child Assent forms must be secured for all participating students prior to the beginning of the study.
5. The study will involve approximately 300 students, in grades 9 through 12 at Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School.
6. Disruption of the school's routine by the data collection activities of the study must be kept at a minimum. Data collection activities must not interfere with the district's testing schedule.
7. Based on the Principal's original agreement ALL research activities must be conducted with the knowledge and approval of the Principal. All efforts should be made to minimize any negative impact on the learning environment.

Beyond the conditions for approval, the Research Review Committee thinks that the study would be **improved**, if these suggestions were implemented; however, this is **not a condition** of the approval.

- I. Translate the Parent Consent form into other languages (especially Spanish and Haitian Creole, if needed).

*Office of Program Evaluation • 1500 Biscayne Boulevard • Suite 224 • Miami, FL 33132
305-995-7529 • 305-995-2691(FAX) • www.dadeschools.net*

It should be emphasized that the approval of the Research Review Committee does not constitute an endorsement of the study. It is simply a permission to request the voluntary cooperation in the study of individuals associated with MDCPS.

It is your responsibility to ensure that appropriate procedures are followed in requesting an individual's cooperation, and that all aspects of the study are conducted in a professional manner. With regard to the latter, make certain that all documents and instruments distributed within MDCPS as a part of the study are carefully edited.

The approval number for your study is **1677**. This number should be used in all communications to clearly identify the study as approved by the Research Review Committee. The approval expires on **June 30, 2012**. During the approval period, the study must adhere to the design, procedures and instruments which were submitted to the Research Review Committee.

Finally, as indicated in your application, please submit to the RRC an abstract of the research findings by **July 2012**.

If there are any changes in the study as it relates to MDCPS, the RRC must be notified in writing. Substantial changes may necessitate resubmission of the request. Failure to notify me of such a change may result in the cancellation of the approval.

If you have any questions, please call me at 305-995-7529. On behalf of the Research Review Committee, I want to wish you every success with your study.

Sincerely,



Tarek Chebbi, Ed. D.
Chairperson
Research Review Committee

TC:bf

APPROVAL NUMBER: **1677**

APPROVAL EXPIRES: **06/30/2012**

Note: The researcher named in this letter of approval will be solely responsible and strictly accountable for any deviation from or failure to follow the research study as approved by the RRC. M-DCPS will NOT be held responsible for any claim and/or damage resulting from conducting this study.

**APPENDIX C: Permission to Use Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents
(SPPA)**

SUSAN HARTER

SPRING 2009

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Email: sharter@ du.edu

GUIDELINES WITH REGARD TO THE PURCHASE OF OUR MANUALS

(INCLUDING LISTS OF RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS.) We very much appreciate your interest in our work and want to continue to make our instruments available for your use. Some of our procedures have changed, in part due to changes in University policies beyond our control, and thus we want to bring you up to date.

MAIL MANUAL ORDERS TO: DR. SUSAN HARTER

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

2155 S. RACE STREET

DENVER, CO 80

ATTENTION: ORDER REQUEST

We are making our comb-bound manuals available for what we feel is a nominal cost, given our copying costs.

These costs have increased slightly given inflation and this has influenced our own prices. Moreover, the University is no longer covering our mailing costs. So we now need to charge for mailing expenses.

The University Administration has recently changed its policy with regard to credit card use across all departments. NO credit cards will now be accepted. (In part, this is to protect potential credit card users.) This is a new policy that will go into effect in March of 2009.

Our manuals will continue to be available by regular mail. Send your orders directly to me at the address above.

Our manuals have never been available on line or via email. They are comb-bound manuals, some of which include pictorial materials that require regular mailing.

Please do NOT send orders to me via email. Send orders to the address above. We also can no longer accept fax orders since we must have prepayment.

(7) If you have questions about our instruments, their use, and their appropriateness to your project, I will be happy to answer your questions, via email. My goal is to enhance your projects, and often I can offer advice or suggestions.

(8) We receive numerous requests for our “tests”. Please understand that our instruments are not “tests”. We go to great lengths in our materials to make it clear that these are NOT tests. There are no right/wrong answers. Yet if we casually use the word test, with a teacher, an administrator, the participants themselves, that may alter the

perception of our instruments. So please, be careful to not refer to these surveys as tests. "Surveys" are the best way to refer to these instruments.

(9) I will be retiring in May of 2009. However, we will continue to make our instruments available through the procedures outlined above and below, and we hope that they will meet your needs.

(10) HOW CAN YOU PAY FOR YOUR ORDER GIVEN NEW UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES THERE ARE SEVERAL POSSIBILITIES: ALL NOW INVOLVE PRE-PAYMENT.

PAYMENT CAN BE SENT TO DR. SUSAN HARTER OR TO THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER.

You can send a personal or business check.

You can send a money order.

You can send an institutional purchase order, WITH a check.

If you have a Federal Express account, order through that route, if prepaid.

If you are desperate, for whatever reason, you could express mail an order. You could also include a check for us to express mail you back the materials. That is hard to estimate, but \$20 would probably cover the costs.

Please do not place ORDERS through me via email. I will be glad to answer substantive questions, but please use the ordering channels that are outlined.

WE ARE SORRY THAT WE CAN NO LONGER ACCEPT CREDIT CARD ORDERS,
DUE TO NEW UNIVERSITY POLICY. WE NOW MUST HAVE PREPAYMENT IN
AN ALTERNATIVE FORM, AS INDICATED ABOVE. THANK YOU FOR
UNDERSTANDING OUR NEW CONSTRAINTS.

APPENDIX D: Harter Self-perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA)

What I Am Like

Name _____ Age _____ Birthday _____ Month _____ Day _____ Group _____

SAMPLE SENTENCE

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me		BUT		Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me
a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers like to go to movies in their spare time		Other teenagers would rather go to sports events.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are just as smart as others their age		Other teenagers aren't so sure and wonder if they are as smart.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers find it hard to make friends		For other teenagers it's pretty easy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do very well at all kinds of sports		Other teenagers don't feel that they are very good when it comes to sports.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are <i>not</i> happy with the way they look		Other teenagers <i>are</i> happy with the way they look.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are ready to do well at a part-time job		Other teenagers feel that they are not quite ready to handle a part-time job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that if they are romantically interested in someone, that person will like them back		Other teenagers worry that when they like someone romantically, that person <i>won't</i> like them back.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually do the right thing		Other teenagers often don't do what they know is right.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are able to make really close friends		Other teenagers find it hard to make really close friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are often disappointed with themselves		Other teenagers are pretty pleased with themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are pretty slow in finishing their school work		Other teenagers can do their school work more quickly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers have a lot of friends		Other teenagers don't have very many friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think they could do well at just about any new athletic activity		Other teenagers are afraid they might not do well at a new athletic activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me			Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me	
13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish their body was different	BUT	Other teenagers like their body the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they <i>don't</i> have enough skills to do well at a job	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they <i>do</i> have enough skills to do a job well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are <i>not</i> dating the people they are really attracted to	BUT	Other teenagers <i>are</i> dating those people they are attracted to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers often get in trouble for the things they do	BUT	Other teenagers usually <i>don't</i> do things that get them in trouble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do have a close friend they can share secrets with	BUT	Other teenagers do not have a really close friend they can share secrets with	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't like the way they are leading their life	BUT	Other teenagers do like the way they are leading their life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do very well at their classwork	BUT	Other teenagers don't do very well at their classwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are very hard to like	BUT	Other teenagers are really easy to like.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are better than others their age at sports	BUT	Other teenagers don't feel they can play as well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish their physical appearance was different	BUT	Other teenagers like their physical appearance the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel they are old enough to get and keep a paying job	BUT	Other teenagers do not feel they are old enough, yet, to really handle a job well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that people their age will be romantically attracted to them	BUT	Other teenagers worry about whether people their age will be attracted to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel really good about the way they act	BUT	Other teenagers <i>don't</i> feel that good about the way they often act	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish they had a really close friend to share things with	BUT	Other teenagers <i>do</i> have a close friend to share things with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are happy with themselves most of the time	BUT	Other teenagers are often not happy with themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers have trouble figuring out the answers in school	BUT	Other teenagers almost always can figure out the answers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me			Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me	
29.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are popular with others their age	BUT	Other teenagers are not very popular.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't do well at new outdoor games	BUT	Other teenagers are good at new games right away.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think that they are good looking	BUT	Other teenagers think that they are not very good looking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel like they could do better at work they do for pay	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they are doing really well at work they do for pay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are fun and interesting on a date	BUT	Other teenagers wonder about how fun and interesting they are on a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do things they know they shouldn't do	BUT	Other teenagers hardly ever do things they know they shouldn't do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers find it hard to make friends they can really trust	BUT	Other teenagers are able to make close friends they can really trust.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers like the kind of person they are	BUT	Other teenagers often wish they were someone else.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are pretty intelligent	BUT	Other teenagers question whether they are intelligent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are socially accepted	BUT	Other teenagers wished that more people their age accepted them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do not feel that they are very athletic	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they are very athletic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers really like their looks	BUT	Other teenagers wish they looked different.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are really able to handle the work on a paying job	BUT	Other teenagers wonder if they are really doing as good a job at work as they should be doing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually <i>don't</i> go out with the people they would really like to date	BUT	Other teenagers <i>do</i> go out with the people they really want to date.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually act the way they know they are supposed to	BUT	Other teenagers often don't act the way they are supposed to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers <i>don't</i> have a friend that is close enough to share really personal thoughts with	BUT	Other teenagers do have a close friend that they can share personal thoughts and feelings with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are very happy being the way they are	BUT	Other teenagers wish they were different.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Demographic Information SPPA Online

1. What grade are you currently in at Dr. Michael Krop Senior High School?

9th

10th

11th

12th

2. How old are you?

14

17

15

18

16

19

3. With which group do you MOST identify?

African American

Hispanic –Non-white

Asian

Multi-racial

Caribbean

White

Hispanic

APPENDIX E: Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988)

Specific Domains

1. Scholastic Competence
2. Social Acceptance
3. Athletic Competence
4. Physical Appearance
5. Job Competence
6. Romantic Appeal
7. Behavioral Conduct
8. Close Friendship
9. Global Self-Worth

Content of each domain

1. Scholastic Competence. This subscale taps adolescents' perceptions of their competence or ability within the realm of scholastic performance (e.g. how well he/she is doing in class work and how smart or intelligent one feels one is).
2. Social Acceptance. This subscale taps the degree to which adolescents are accepted by peers, feel popular, have a lot of friends, and feel they are easy to like.
3. Athletic Competence. This subscale taps the adolescent's perceptions of his/ her athletic ability and competence at sports, e.g., feelings that one is good at sports and athletic activities.

4. Physical Appearance. This subscale taps the degree to which the adolescent is happy with the way he/she looks, likes one's body, and feels that he/she is good looking.
5. Job Competence. This subscale taps the extent to which the adolescent feels that he/ she has job skills, is ready to do well at part-time jobs, and feels that one is doing well at the jobs he /she has.
6. Romantic Appeal. This subscale taps teenager's perceptions that they are romantically attractive to those in whom they are interested, are dating the people they would like to be dating, and feel that they are fun and interesting to date.
7. Behavioral Conduct. This subscale taps the degree to which one likes the way one behaves, does the right thing, acts the way one is supposed to, and avoids getting into trouble.
8. Close Friendship. This subscale taps one's ability to make close friends they one can share personal thoughts and secrets with.
9. Global Self-Worth. These items tap the extent to which the adolescent likes oneself as a person, is happy the way one is leading one's life, and is generally happy with the way one is. Thus it constitutes a global judgment of one's worth as a person, rather than domain-specific competence or adequacy.

APPENDIX F: Additional Questions Asked of Those Who Agree to Participate in an Interview

In response to your willingness to participate in an interview please answer the following questions:

Name

Phone

Email

APPENDIX G: Semi Structured Interview Questions

1. What is your overall academic average in your required core courses?
2. What has been beneficial, as a gifted female student, to your academic performance and /or self-perception in your school experiences?
3. Do you perceive yourself as a successful gifted student (Why, Why not)?
4. Describe the attributes and characteristics of a student who is successful in gifted classes vs. a student who is unsuccessful?
5. How would you describe yourself academically as a student compared to other students in the general population?
6. Are most of your friends in the gifted program or does it vary?
7. Are you involved in any kind of in-school or after-school enrichment program(s)?
8. What would you identify as a strength in the gifted program coursework, teachers, and or distinguishing school or extracurricular experiences that has contributed to your _____ (state domains of significance to complete question)? Explain?
9. What would you identify as a weakness in the gifted program coursework, teachers, and or distinguishing school or extracurricular experiences that has negatively affected your _____ (state domains low numbers to complete question)? Explain?

10. Have you ever been encouraged by an honors, advanced placement or teacher of the gifted in high school to go beyond what is required in class? If so, why do you think they encouraged you to go beyond what is required.

~~~~~

Sample domain-specific questions/stems....

11. How did you get to be \_\_\_\_\_(fill in item content, e.g. schoolwork, sports, not so good looking?)

12. What happened to make you \_\_\_\_\_?

13. What's the main reason for why you are \_\_\_\_\_?

14. How do you know that you \_\_\_\_\_( fill in item content, e. g.. are good at your school work; don't have friends; act the way you are supposed to; are good- looking?)

15. What makes you think you \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in item content)?

16. What makes you think \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in item content)?z

**APPENDIX H: Permission to Record Telephone Interviews**

I agree \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

(Participant Name)

(Parent Name)

To allow the interview to be taped for accuracy and completeness during the study for review purposes. It is my understanding that the recorded information will be secured for five years and will in no way be used for any other purposes except the proposed study.

Signature (parent) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (participant) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (researcher) \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX I: Principal Letter**

Dear Principal of Dr. Krop Senior High School,

Your permission to conduct a research study of gifted female students at Dr. Krop Senior High is requested. The title of the study is Academic Self-perception of Gifted Female High School Student. The research is being conducted by Yvette Avery Gittens, a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Instruction department at Barry University, who is seeking information that will be useful in the field of gifted female high school students. The goals of the research can better prepare gifted female students for gifted programming and the development of academic achievement and female eminence over their lifetime. In accordance with these goals, the following procedures will be used students will take online the Harter Self-perception Profile for Adolescents, and as a voluntary option participants can be interviewed.

If you decide to permit this research study at your school, gifted female students will be asked to agree to participate in the online profile. Following the profile students can voluntarily participate in a telephone or face to face interview. Participation of participants is strictly voluntary. At any time in the study students may decline to participate or should choose to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse effects.

The risks of involvement are minimal and include sharing profile results and answering interview questions. The following procedures will be used to minimize these

risks: anonymity of students throughout profile and submission and secured answers to interviews. Although there are no direct benefits to you, your agreement to conduct this study at the school may include continued support by school systems for gifted female learners in high school. Research participant information provided during the study will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Any published results of the research will refer to group averages only and no names will be used in the study. Data will be kept in a locked file in the researcher's office. Student consent forms will be kept separate from the data. All data will be destroyed after five years.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study or your agreement to allow the research study at Dr. Krop Senior High School, you may contact me, Yvette Avery Gittens, at 305 652-6808, my supervisor, Dr. Giordano, at 305 899-3613, or the Institutional Review Board, Barbara Cook at (305) 899- 3020 . If you are satisfied with the information provided and are willing to permit this research, please signify your consent by signing this consent form.

Voluntary Consent

I acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature and purposes of this study being conducted by Yvette Avery Gittens and that I have read and understand the information presented above, and that I have received a copy of this form for my records. I give my voluntary consent to allow the research study at Dr. Krop Senior High School.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## **APPENDIX J: Gifted Coordinator Letter**

Dear Gifted Coordinator of Dr. Krop Senior High School,

Your assistance is requested in this research study of gifted female students at Dr. Krop Senior High. The title of the study is Academic Self-perception and Performance of Gifted Female High School Students. The research is being conducted by Yvette Avery Gittens, a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Instruction department at Barry University, who is seeking information that will be useful in the field of gifted female high school students. The goals of the research can better prepare gifted female students for gifted programming and the development of academic achievement and female eminence over their lifetime. In accordance with these goals, the following procedures will be used students will take online the Harter Self-perception Profile for Adolescence, and as a voluntary option participants can be interviewed.

If you decide to assist in this research, you will be asked to notify parents and gifted females at Dr. Krop Senior High by presenting a script of the study and the consent and assent letters to participate in the online profile. Following the profile students can voluntarily participate in a telephone or face to face interview. Your agreement to assist in the research study is strictly voluntary. At any time in the study you may decline to assist in the study, there will be no adverse effects.

The risks of involvement are minimal and include sharing profile results and answering interview questions. The following procedures will be used to minimize these risks: anonymity of students throughout profile and submission and secured answers to

interviews. Although there are no direct benefits to you, your assistance in this study may include continued support by school systems for gifted female learners in high school.

The information of research participants will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Any published results of the research will refer to group averages only and no names will be used in the study. Data will be kept in a locked file in the researcher's office. Your agreement to assist in the will be kept separate from the data.

All data will be destroyed at the completion of the study.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study or your assistance in the study, you may contact me, Yvette Avery Gittens, at 305 652-6808, my supervisor, Dr. Giordano, at 305 899-3613, or the Institutional Review Board, Barbara Cook at (305) 899- 3020. If you are satisfied with the information provided and are willing to participate in this research, please signify your agreement by signing this consent form.

#### Voluntary Consent

I acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature and purposes of this study being conducted by Yvette Avery Gittens and that I have read and understand the information presented above, and that I have received a copy of this form for my records. I give my voluntary consent to assist in this experiment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Gifted Coordinator Script

As a gifted female high school student you are invited to participate in a research study of gifted female students at Dr. Krop Senior High. The letters you are receiving today for you and your parents is an invitation to participate voluntarily in the study at the school. The title of the study is Academic Self-perception and Performance of Gifted Female High School Student.

Please review the letters with your parents and return the letters to me (gifted coordinator) with the correct signatures as soon as possible. It is only necessary to return the letters, if you decide to participate in the research study.

Research FLYER

ATTENTION: GIFTED FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS in Grades 9-12

Research Study to be conducted at Dr. Krop Senior High School from March to June  
2011

Title of Research Study:

Academic Self-perceptions and Performance of the Gifted Female High School Student

Researcher: Ms. Yvette Avery Gittens, Barry University

Contact: Mrs. Ruth Smith, Gifted Coordinator

How to Participate:

Take online: Harter Self-perception Profile for Adolescents (50 minutes)

Optional: Interviews to be conducted in school library (30 minutes)

INTERESTED PARTICIPANTS CONTACT MS. RUTH SMITH IMMEDIATELY at

(305) 652-6808

## **APPENDIX K: Parent Permission Letter and Assent Form Ages (15-17)**

Barry University

Informed Consent

Dear Parent of a gifted female high school student,

Your daughter's participation in this research study of gifted female students at Dr. Krop Senior High is requested. The title of the study is Academic Self-perceptions and Performance of Gifted Female High School Student. The research is being conducted by Yvette Avery Gittens, a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Instruction department at Barry University, who is seeking information that will be useful in the field of gifted female high school students. The goals of the research can better prepare gifted female students for gifted programming and the development of academic achievement and female eminence over their lifetime. In accordance with these goals, the following procedures will be used: students will take online the Harter Self-perception Profile for Adolescents, and as a voluntary option participants can be interviewed about their completed profile.

If you decide to permit your daughter to participate in this research, your daughter will be asked to agree to participate in the online profile. Following the profile she can voluntarily participate in a telephone or face to face interview. Your consent to allow your daughter to be a research participant is strictly voluntary. At any time in the study you may decline to have her participate or should you choose to have her drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse effects.

The risks of involvement are minimal and include sharing profile results and answering interview questions. The following procedures will be used to minimize these risks: anonymity of students throughout profile and submission and secured answers to interviews. Although there are no direct benefits to your daughter, your daughter's participation in this study may include continued support by school systems for gifted female learners in high school. As a research participant, your daughter, the information she provides will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Any published results of the research will refer to group averages only and no names will be used in the study. Data will be kept in a locked file in the researcher's office. Your consent form will be kept separate from the data. All data will be destroyed at the completion of the study.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study or your participation in the study, you may contact me, Yvette Avery Gittens, at 305 652-6808, my supervisor, Dr. Giordano, at 305 899-3613, or the Institutional Review Board, Barbara Cook at (305) 899- 3020. If you are satisfied with the information provided and are willing to participate in this research, please signify your consent by signing this consent form.

## Voluntary Consent

I acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature and purposes of this study being conducted by Yvette Avery Gittens and that I have read and understand the information presented above, and that I have received a copy of this form for my records. I give my voluntary consent to participate in this experiment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Barry University**

### **Assent Form (Ages 15-17)**

Your participation in a research project is requested. The title of the study is Academic Self-perceptions and Performance of the Gifted Female Senior High Student. The research is being conducted by Yvette Avery Irizarry, a student in the School of Education of Barry University, and is seeking information that will be useful in the field of Curriculum and Instruction in gifted education. The aim of the research is academic self-perceptions and performance of gifted female high school students. In accordance with this aim, the following procedures will be used: online profile of self-perceptions and interviews. We anticipate the number of participants to be 75 to 322.

If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to do the following: to go online to Survey Monkey to complete a 50 minute profile of self-perceptions. In addition, participants can continue in an interview to further explain the online profile for 30 minutes in the school library during school hours.

The consent to participate in this research is strictly voluntary and if you chose not to do it or should your want to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no unfavorable effects on you.

There are no risks in being a part of this study. Although there are no direct benefits to you, your participation in this study may help our understanding of gifted female high school student. Any information you provide will be held in confidence to



the extent permitted by law. If results of the research are published, it will refer to group averages only and no names will be used in the study. Data will be kept in a locked file in the researcher's office and destroyed at the end of the study. Your signed assent will be kept separate from the data. All data will be destroyed at the end of the study.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, you may call me, Ms. Yvette Avery Gittens at (305) 625-6808, or my advisor, Dr. Giordano at (305) 899-3613 or the Institutional Review Board point of contact, Barbara Cook at (305) 899- 3020. If you are satisfied with the information provided and are willing to be a part of this research, please consent by signing this assent form.

### **Voluntary Consent**

I acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature and purposes of this experiment by Ms. Yvette Avery Gittens. I have read and understand the information presented above. I have received a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_ I am willing to be a part of the research study.

\_\_\_\_ I am not willing to be a part of the research study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Child

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **APPENDIX L: Participant Letter**

Barry University

Informed Consent

Dear Gifted Female high school participant,

Your participation in this research study of gifted female students at Dr. Krop Senior High is requested. The title of the study is Academic Self-perception and Performance of Gifted Female High School Students. The research is being conducted by Yvette Avery Gittens, a doctoral student in the Curriculum and Instruction department at Barry University, who is seeking information that will be useful in the field of gifted female high school students. The goals of the research can better prepare gifted female students for gifted programming and the development of academic achievement and female eminence over their lifetime. In accordance with these goals, the following procedures will be used: students will take online the Harter Self-perception Profile for Adolescents, and as a voluntary option participants can be interviewed.

If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to agree to participate in the online profile. Following the profile, you can voluntarily participate in a telephone or face to face interview. Your consent to be a research participant is strictly voluntary. At any time in the study you may decline to participate or should you choose to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse effects.

The risks of involvement are minimal and include sharing profile results and answering interview questions. The following procedures will be used to minimize these risks: anonymity of students throughout profile and submission and secured answers to interviews. Although there are no direct benefits to you, your participation in this study may include continued support by school systems for gifted female learners in high school. As a research participant, information you provide will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Any published results of the research will refer to group averages only and no names will be used in the study. Data will be kept in a locked file in the researcher's office. Your consent form will be kept separate from the data. All data will be destroyed after five years.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study or your participation in the study, you may contact me, Yvette Avery Gittens, at 305 652-6808, or my supervisor, Dr. Giordano, at 305 899-3613. If you are satisfied with the information provided and are willing to participate in this research, please signify your consent by signing this consent form

## Voluntary Consent

I acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature and purposes of this study being conducted by Yvette Avery Gittens and that I have read and understand the information presented above, and that I have received a copy of this form for my records. I give my voluntary consent to participate in this experiment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX M: Statement of Confidentiality**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, will maintain confidentiality of the information gathered and reviewed during this study. In no way will I release or relinquish information of the participants, their results, or responses to any party for any reason. I will during the course of the study, discuss only the gathered information with the researcher of the study, Yvette Avery Gittens.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

## VITA

**Yvette Marie Avery Gittens**

Email: [yairizarry@dadeschools.net](mailto:yairizarry@dadeschools.net)

### **Education:**

- 2010 Educational Leadership k-12 certification  
Barry University
- 2005 Educational Specialist  
Curriculum Instruction Specialization: Gifted Populations  
Barry University
- 1991 Master of Science  
English Education and English for Speakers of Other Languages  
Nova Southeastern University
- 1985 Bachelor's of Arts  
English Literature/ Professional Writing  
Southampton College of Long Island University

### **Experience:**

- 2011-present Adjunct Professor ESL Department  
Miami Dade College  
Miami, FL
- 2009-2010 Adjunct Professor ESL Department  
Broward College  
Davie, FL
- 2008 Advanced Placement State Textbook Committee  
Miami Dade County Public Schools  
Miami, FL
- 2007-2009 Adjunct Professor Gifted Education and Educational Leadership  
Barry University  
Miami, FL
- 2005-2008 Curriculum Support Specialist Secondary  
Division of Advanced Academic Programs  
Miami Dade County Public Schools
- 2006-2008 District Assistance Team, Focus Team,  
Secondary Curriculum Instruction under Superintendent  
Division of Advanced Academic Programs  
Miami Dade County Public Schools

- 2008-present Language Arts Teacher of the Gifted  
Dr. Michael Krop Senior High  
Miami, FL
- 2005-1996 Language Arts Teacher  
Maritime and Science Technology High School  
Miami, FL
- 1999-2000 International Russian Educational Teacher Exchange Program  
Miami Dade County Public Schools  
United States State Department
- 1999-2000 ESSAC Chairperson  
Maritime and Science Technology High School  
Miami, FL
- 1996-1991 Language Arts and ESOL Teacher  
Norland Middle School  
Miami, FL
- 1993-1995 English Department Chair  
Norland Middle School  
Miami, FL
- 1994-1995 Grant Coordinator and Network Administrator  
Norland Middle School  
Miami, FL

**Presentations:**

- 2007 Consultation Model for Senior High Schools. Professional Development  
Miami Dade County Public Schools.
- 2006 Revamping Education for Gifted Learners (REGAL Plan). Professional Development  
Miami Dade County Public Schools.
- 2006 Mentoring: Making a Big World Smaller. National Curriculum Network Conference.  
College of William and Mary Center of Gifted Education. Williamsburg, VA.
- 2005 Who's Who in Underachievement. Florida Association for the Gifted Annual  
Conference, Orlando, FL.

**Professional Honors:**

- National Board Certification (2001-present) Adolescence/Young Adulthood English
- National Endowment for the Humanities (2011) Amherst College Summer Scholar
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (2011) English Language Arts Standards  
committee