

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE
TEACHING PRACTICES AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDENTS IN GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

Katrina A. Massey Cruz: Elementary Principals' Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices and the Identification of African American Students in Gifted Education Programs
Under the direction of Fenwick English

The quantitative study investigated the relationships between (a) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of Cultural Responsive Teaching (CRT) practices, (b) the North Carolina Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) standards, and (c) the proportionality of gifted enrollment for African American students in North Carolina. The literature review revealed that culturally responsive programs successfully identify students of color for gifted education placement. However, non-culturally responsive programs resulted in great amounts of disproportionality in gifted enrollment, limiting African American access to advanced curriculum and instruction. The study explored three research questions to assess relationships:

- 1) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and a principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices?
- 2) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?
- and 3) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?

A correlational analysis revealed a positive statistical relationship between the three variables. Accordingly, strategies were recommended to educational leaders to increase awareness concerning the proportionality of African American students in gifted education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “An injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” (King, M. L., para. 4, Letter from a Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963). It is imperative for educational leaders to understand that the educational experiences of African American students is important and relevant in order to ensure social justice and equity in the educational system. Nationwide, African American students face inequitable treatment in various ways including school discipline, suspension, and expulsion (Keleher, 2000; Moore & Ratchford, 2007; Loosen, 2011; Skiba et al., 2011), referral to remedial education (Blanchett, 2006; O’Connor & Fernandez, 2006), and ability tracking including low enrollment rates into rigorous curriculum such as Advanced Placement math courses (Kelly, 2009). As a result of these educational infringements, an achievement gap between African American and White students exist (Wilkins et al., 2006; Flores, 2007; NAEP, 2015b). Take North Carolina for example.

In North Carolina, the African American-White achievement gap between students is the largest educational gap between White students and any other minority group (NC School Report Card, 2011-2013; See Table 1). In fact, the achievement gap between African American and White students in the 2011-2012 school year reflects a 29.9 percentage gap and a 29.3 percentage gap the following school year (NC School Report Card, 2012-2013). Research concerning the African American-White achievement gap, special education referral, and ability tracking inspired this study to conduct research on the African American-White enrollment gap in gifted education. The current study focused on the disparities seen in gifted education and the

connection between elementary principals’ perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American students in gifted education programs. Factors including the definition of giftedness, identification criteria, and factors that threaten the placement and sustainability of African American students in gifted education must be considered (Singleton, Livingston, Hines, & Jones, 2007).

Table 1
Student Proficiency in Reading and Math in 2012-2013 & 2011-2012

School Year	All Students	White	African American	Hispanic	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Two or More Races
2012 - 13	32.0%	43.5%	14.2%	19.3%	17.3%	56.7%	28.7%	32.2%
2011 - 12	67.5%	79.3%	49.4%	55.1%	55.3%	79.1%	64.1%	69.7%
% Change Between Years	-35.5%	-35.8%	-35.2%	-35.8%	-38.0%	-22.4%	-35.4%	-37.5%

Note. Proficiency is based on the NC End-of-Grade Test for Elementary and Middle grades
 Source: Education First North Carolina Report Card, State Report Cards, 2011-12, 2012-13
 Retrieved from <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src/stateDetails.jsp?Page=1&pYear=2011-2012>
 Retrieved from <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src/stateDetails.jsp?Page=1&pYear=2012-2013>

In Chapter I, the history of national and state gifted education is delivered. Additionally, Chapter I presents the statement of the problem, purpose of the research study, and an introduction into the theoretical framework. This chapter also describes the significance of the research and concludes with a description of gifted programs and definitions of terms used in the study. To start, the following section will review the Jacob K. Javits Act. This section is designed to explain the history, purpose, and programmatic structure of gifted education in the public school system nationwide. It is important to note that the Jacob K. Javits Act is the first federally recognized program geared to organize gifted education for public schools. Following this section is the history of gifted education in North Carolina-the state of research interest.

The History of the Jacob K. Javits Act

Gifted education is a congressionally led initiative identified in the Jacob K. Javits Gifted & Talented Students Education Act of 1988. Each state generates policies and procedures to define, implement, and maintain gifted education programs for local education agencies (LEAs). The Javits Act is the only federal education program specified for gifted and talented academics, though it is not a federally funded project (National Association for Gifted Children, n.d. a). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) defines “gifted” as:

Students or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2004, Title IX, Part A, Definition 22).

The Javits Act has a programmatic focus on underrepresented students in gifted education. These students are identified as low-income, limited English proficient, disabled, and/or minority students (National Association for Gifted Children, n.d. a). The Javits Act aims to decrease the achievement gaps between groups of students for an equitable learning experience (U.S. Department of Education, 2015; National Association for Gifted Children, n.d. a).

The Javits Act provides local districts with innovative strategies that stem from synchronized scientifically based programs and demonstration projects to improve gifted services offered to primary and secondary education students (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). One component of Javits is the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. This entity houses exemplars of educational research for educators, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to guide educational policy and practice in the field of gifted education. Another component of the Javits Act consists of demonstration grants made available to state education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs). The first grant type is “Priority One” used

to develop gifted models that serve underrepresented students. The second grant type is “Priority Two” which provides grant funds that support state and local improvement of general services for gifted and talented students (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Although gifted and talented education is primarily funded through the state budget, these initiatives are offered to create a comparable, yet competitive and rigorous gifted education program between the states (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

With a more narrow scope, the current study is focused on gifted education at the elementary level. It is suspected that the under identification of African American students at the elementary level leads to an unnatural influence on African American students during the secondary education years as well. Though gifted placement for African American students is a national problem, the study investigated gifted programs operating in North Carolina only. This state was chosen as a convenience sample. The researcher has been employed in the North Carolina public school system for over six years and holds two professional licensures in school counseling and school administration through the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Occupationally, the researcher has supervisory experience in gifted and special education and is familiar with AIG matters. However, where appropriate, references to research conducted in other states are mentioned for comparison purposes between gifted and talented programs nationwide.

Gifted Education in North Carolina

North Carolina’s version of gifted education for primary and secondary students is titled “Academically or Intellectually Gifted” (AIG). State legislation administered the gifted education program in 1961. In 1974, gifted and handicapped children were identified as children with “special needs” in North Carolina legislation (State Board of Education, 2015a). In 1977, Chapter 927 of the NC Session Laws generated a compliance system of educational

opportunities for special needs children requiring special education services (State Board of Education, 2015a). Following this law, Chapter 247 of the NC Session Laws revised the title of the program to “Academically Gifted” and later required the state to re-evaluate state laws, rules, and policies surrounding gifted education in the 1993’s Chapter 321, Section 135(c) statute (State Board of Education, 2015a). Finally, in 1996, the latest legislation for gifted education was passed and Article 9B provided a state definition for “Academically or Intellectually Gifted”. Due to legislation, all school districts are required to submit up-to-date, three-year AIG plans to the State Board of Education for approval (State Board of Education, 2015a).

The state of North Carolina allows each school district or local education agency (LEA) to determine gifted identification procedures concerning recruitment, eligibility, assessment, selection, and curriculum according to state standards (State Board of Education, 2015a). Each LEA must adhere to state legislation and the North Carolina AIG Program Standards that define and guide gifted programs statewide. The required three year AIG plan allows the State Board of Education to monitor policies and practices that guide gifted education in identification and delivery of services (State Board of Education, 2015a). Through conversations with AIG specialists and teachers in various school districts, the researcher has learned that many school districts in the state of North Carolina, conduct school-wide screenings of all third grade students for gifted identification as part of the recruitment and selection process. From there, identified students are labeled “Exceptional” and thus, qualify to receive AIG services. Through a gifted plan of study, students’ complete gifted coursework only designated for gifted students from elementary throughout middle and high school. AIG specialist and teachers reported to the researcher that students may receive inclusion services in the regular classroom setting, or be removed from the classroom completely and relocated to a designated AIG class to receive gifted

instruction. Once identified, gifted students receive services until exited from the AIG program upon graduation in twelfth grade. AIG services offer accelerated coursework in English Language Arts and Mathematics to qualifying students in grades 3 through 8. However, other accelerated courses in Science and Social Studies are made available in some school districts although these subjects are not included in the traditional classification of AIG. For gifted students in grades 9-12, North Carolina offers International Baccalaureate (IB), Honors, and Advance Placement (AP) courses through the College Board. Highly qualified teachers are typically reserved to teach gifted students and must complete a certification process in gifted education in order to do so.

In addition to gifted literature situated in North Carolina, it is important to review research findings across the nation concerning gifted identification in other states. Additionally, it is imperative to consider the long-term effects of student identification or more importantly, misidentification at the secondary level. Though the study focused on gifted education at the elementary level, data on secondary education is briefly mentioned in Chapters I and II. The purpose of including secondary data is to display the chronological impact of how disproportionality and the inequitable access to gifted education at the elementary level further influences the educational careers of gifted African American learners at the secondary level as well. Displaying this impact, supports the importance of the research study and the significance as to why this matter is a problem that should be explored with additional research. Exploration of disproportionality in its totality is vital to assist African American students at all academic levels. In doing so, the statement of the research problem is structured to illustrate issues of disproportionality seen in gifted enrollment across the United States for African American

learners. After the statement of the problem is identified, Chapter 1 reveals the purpose of this study.

Statement of the Problem

“The majority of students participating in gifted and talented programs across the country are White” (National Education Association, 2007, p. 7). In 2007, the National Education Association produced an article entitled, *Truth in Labeling: Disproportionality in Special Education*. The article collected numerous statistics and empirical evidence to display the disproportionate numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students in U.S. schools. The article captured substantial information regarding gifted and talented populations as well as remedial education statistics. It was noted that numerous factors contributed to the disproportionality of CLD students identified in gifted education. These factors were identified as (National Education Association, 2007, pp. 14-15):

- *cultural differences in language expression and communication styles;*
- **less opportunity for early exposure to school-related academic or curricular experiences;**
- *preferred learning styles, e.g., learning primarily through listening (verbal) or through physically interacting with learning materials (kinesthetic);*
- different gender-role customs and behaviors;
- lack of information about the availability of social and health care services in the school and community;
- **limited parental involvement in school activities;**
- lack of access to academically successful role models;

- lack of resources for extra-curricular enrichment activities, e.g., dance or drama classes, chess teams, music lessons;
- **stereotypic or lower expectations of teachers or family;**
- **lack of culturally responsive assessments;**
- *rigid or inappropriate eligibility criteria that are not responsive to cultural and ethnic differences.*

Of the eleven contributing factors identified by the National Education Association, four of the items (highlighted in bold) are also identified in this research study (preparation, parental involvement, educators' perceptions, and test bias) as contributing factors to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education. Additionally, three of the contributing factors (italicized) identified by the National Education Association are also mentioned in this research study as elements of culturally responsive teaching which guided the research. In the publication, the National Education Association raised significant questions related to special (gifted and remedial) identification. These questions are important to consider when evaluating gifted disproportionality (National Education Association, 2007, p. 17):

- What are your state's or district's eligibility criteria for gifted and/or talented programs?
 - How responsive are the criteria to cultural differences?
- How consistent are criteria for identifying whether students are eligible for special education services implemented from district to district and school to school?
- What guidelines are used to ensure that assessments are culturally responsive?
- How does your state define significant disproportionality?
- What repercussions exist for significant overrepresentation or under-representation in special or gifted and/or talented education?

With these overarching questions in mind, it is important to acknowledge that African American students have been deprived of equitable access to resources, education, and human rights as citizens of the United States (Brown v. Board of Education, 1954 & 1955; Aaron v. Cooper, 1956 & 1957) for centuries. Over the years, numerous efforts have been made to equalize rights and privileges of all American citizens. Noteworthy acts symbolizing the struggle of equality and justice are illustrated in the Civil War, Emancipation Proclamation, The Civil Rights Movement, and the acknowledgement and consequential abolition of Jim Crow laws. In many facets of American living, it may be argued that White American privilege and supremacy still exists as social norms today. Over the past decade, national media coverage have revealed various viewpoints from American citizens regarding race relations and legal cases surrounding fatal interactions between men, women, and children of the African American community and White citizens and local police. Well-known cases such as Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Freddy Grey, Eric Garner, Darnisha Harris, Tanisha Anderson, Sandra Bland and more, have been thoroughly televised and discussed in print and social media venues allowing the country's opinions and experiences of prejudice and racial tension to be acknowledged.

Academically, current literature confirms ability tracking in public schools across the nation (Kelly, 2001; Kelly, 2009; Burris, 2010; Baker, 2013). In 2001, former president George W. Bush Jr. signed the *No Child Left Behind Act*; a data system designed to obtain student achievement data and disaggregate information by students' grade level, subject area, and demographic group such as race/ethnicity, language proficiency, and disability status (U.S. Department of Education, 2008, p. 8). The comparative data was intended to measure efficiency and accountability of teachers and administrators with goals to provide equitable learning, and shed light on areas of weakness (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Additionally, *No Child*

Left Behind required each state to administer the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exam to evaluate students in grades 4, 8, and 12 in the core educational disciplines. In the 2008, *A Nation at Risk* report, it was stated:

Persistent achievement gaps between African American students and White students have only been slightly diminished in the last two decades, though in recent years we have seen progress. As a result, African American students are, on average, roughly two to three years behind White students in both reading and math. Further, only 14 percent of African American fourth-graders are proficient readers as measured by NAEP. (U.S. Department of Education, *A Nation at Risk*, p. 14)

These statistics have influenced further investigation into minority achievement in regular, gifted, and remedial education classrooms. Research literature has revealed five common factors related to the under enrollment of African American students in gifted education nationwide: ability tracking (Romanoff, 2009; Burris, 2010; Baker, 2013), teacher perceptions (Siegle & Powell, 2004; Szymanski & Shaff, 2013), the under-preparation of African American students (Ford & Thomas, 1997; Whiting, 2006; Winsler, Karkhanis, Kim, & Levitt, 2013), parental involvement (Denton & West, 2002; Michael-Chadwell, 2010; Grantham & Henfield, 2011), and test bias (Ford, Harris, Tyson, & Trotman, 2002; Jackson, 2012). These factors provide insight into the disparities of African American enrollment in gifted education. Current statistics show African American students are substantially under enrolled in gifted education at disproportionate levels across the nation (See Tables 2-6). Chapter II will review four of the five contributing factors in greater detail (See Figure 1). The remaining factor, test bias, will be mentioned but not discussed at length as this variable has been extensively researched. On the contrary, it appears that less evidence exists in the areas of ability tracking, teacher perceptions,

the under-preparation of African American students, and the role of African American parental involvement. For this reason, these four areas were chosen for further exploration in the literature review while a brief synopsis of test bias is noted.

Commonly, gifted education in North Carolina is managed by teachers, counselors, and gifted education specialists such as directors and coordinators of school or district based gifted education programs. In casual conversations with gifted personnel in many districts, it appears that the process of gifted identification rests with teachers and counselors, and often excludes the presence of school administrators. For that reason the current study focused on elementary principals and their perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American students in gifted education. Insight into this dynamic seemed vital. Investigation into this topic might identify supports for gifted African American male and female students (separately or grouped) that may suffer from:

- Perceptions of low intellect, scholar ability, and academic potential (Ford, Harris, Tyson, & Trotman, 2002)
- [African American males experience] Lowered self-esteem and scholar identity in the absence of African American academic role models (Whiting, 2006)
- Limited access to challenging and rigorous upper-level math education (Kelly, 2009)
- Exposure to educators with low expectations for African American students (Kitchens, 2007)
- Decreased engagement in the academic arena (Ford & Thomas, 1997; Ferguson, 2003)
- [African American immigrant students identified as “English Language Learner(s) experience] High susceptibility to low and remedial tracked education (Klinger & Harry, 2006)

- [African American immigrant students identified as “English Language Learner(s) experience] Restricted access to post-secondary opportunities (Klinger & Harry, 2006)

With greater insight into this contextual problem, the purpose of this study follows.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between elementary school principals’ knowledge and perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American students in the gifted education program at their schools. Thus far, research has identified ability tracking, teacher perceptions of African American students, students' preparedness for gifted education, parental involvement and test bias as five common influences in the disproportionality of African American students identified for gifted education services. Of these five factors, test bias has been the most researched area. Culturally biased tests have often been used to measure African American achievement and aptitude; resulting in low identification due to poor assessment performance (Ford, Harris, Tyson, & Trotman, 2002). Though, ability tracking, teacher perceptions, preparation, and parent involvement have also been linked to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education, the disproportionality remains despite this knowledge. In the next section, gifted identification criteria is taken into account due to its impact on program proportionality.

Through conversations with AIG specialists and teachers in various school districts, the researcher has learned that many NC school districts rely on a combinations of standardized assessments, recommendation letters, portfolios, and student work samples (deemed by their teacher as advanced or "upper-level" work displays) to warrant an AIG referral for screening and identification. As previously mentioned, test bias and teacher perspectives have been noted in past and current research studies (as well as in AIG specialist conversations) as influential factors in the referral and identification process for African American students. Consequently, teacher

training in culturally responsive strategies may help teachers to prepare and recognize giftedness in African American children, (Ford, Harris, Tyson, & Trotman, 2002). This idea derives from knowledge obtained from critical race theory and culturally responsive teaching pedagogy.

In the state of North Carolina, the AIG Program Standards place emphasis on the identification and retention of diverse students. In fact, Standard 1 requires screening, referral, and identification procedures that respond to traditionally under-represented populations including “culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional [students] (State Board of Education, 2015a).” Additionally, Standard 6 requires the monitoring of representation and retention “of under-represented populations in the local AIG program, including students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional (State Board of Education, 2015a).” The researcher of the current study hypothesized that if teachers used culturally responsive teaching strategies (as based on principals’ perceptions and reported teacher use) in gifted identification, there might be an increase in the proportionality of African American students enrolled in gifted programs.

At face value, it seems that the research study should have surveyed elementary classroom teachers. However, due to the extreme sensitivity to the questions asked, it was unlikely that many North Carolina school districts would allow this inquiry with their teachers. Due to the nature of the survey questions, there was a high risk for teachers to respond favorably instead of truthful, which could have caused a halo effect. With this understanding, the next critical audience to survey would be school principals due to their supervision of classroom teachers. It was hypothesized that principals’ knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices, together with adherence to the AIG standards, would demonstrate

multiculturalism and diversity through proportionate African American enrollment in AIG. Hence, principals would hold teachers accountable for using culturally responsive practices and following state standards to improve gifted instruction and identification for minority students.

It is necessary to pinpoint effective ways educators can become culturally aware and proficient leaders that ensure equity in education (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2009). The catalysts for this change is in school principals as educational leaders. School principals are charged with the task of guaranteeing educational success and proficiency for all students. As the chief executive officer, it is under the leadership of the principal that faculty and staff are properly trained and led to execute best practices in an ethical and equitable manner to obtain educational goals set by the local education agency and the state board of education. Thus, all curriculum and instructional matters fall under the duties of the principal and/or the designated administrative team. The principal serves as the chief administrator of the school, and accordingly, “generates and enforces educational policies, programs, and curriculum that endorses academic development for student and professional growth for his/her staff (See Appendix A, bullet 3).” Although gifted identification and access to accelerated education traditionally and routinely rests in the duties of teachers, counselors, and gifted education specialists, it was assumed in this study that principals oversee these positions and ensure that the procedures and practices that govern the gifted program are fair and efficient for all students. In the event that procedures and practices are biased, it was the responsibility of the principal to ‘develop and implement policies that promote the educational development of all students (See Appendix A, bullet 8). With this understanding, the following theoretical framework was used to guide the study. This section is a brief. The full theoretical review is presented in Chapter II.

Theoretical Framework: A Brief Synopsis

The research study drew from the theory of disparate impact to review and analyze the disproportionality of African American students in gifted programs. The theory of disparate impact refers to policies that appear neutral but have a disproportionate, adverse impact on individuals of a protected class based on race, color, gender, nationality, family status, disability, or religion (Long & Hanchey, 2015, p. 8). The study used disproportionality as a measure of disparate impact. The study examined the African American AIG enrollment in comparison to the African American enrollment schoolwide. The differences in enrollment was labeled as disproportionality which refers to the “overrepresentation” or “under-representation” of a particular demographic group enrolled in special or gifted education relative to the enrollment of the demographic group in the overall student population (National Association for Bilingual Education, 2002). For the purpose of this study, disproportionality only refers to race and ethnic background, specifically describing Black/African American students in comparison to White/Caucasian students. For example, if an observed elementary school has 65 percent of its students identified as African American, the research expected to see 65 percent of the gifted population with students identified as African American. Due to North Carolina’s emphasis on cultural diversity in the AIG standards, culturally responsive teaching was used as a lens that influenced the level of diversity in gifted populations.

Culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogy that places emphasis on the culture and experiences of minority groups (Kozleski, 2010). This form of teaching strays from the traditional White middle-class perspective of gathering, interpreting, teaching and evaluating information. Culturally responsive teaching is a learned skillset that educators are taught in order to recognize, include, and motivate minority learners in the learning environment. Teachers who use culturally responsive teaching are said to recognize and acknowledge the contributions of

minority learners (Kozleski, 2010). Thus, culturally responsive teachers differentiate instruction within the classroom, affording them the ability to notice and acknowledge varying ways students display academic mastery and giftedness. Research has found a connection between educators' perceptions of minority students and the referral of these students in gifted and remedial special education programs (Siegal & Powell, 2004; Blanchett, 2006; Michael-Chadwell, 2010). Scholars of culturally responsive teaching suggests that educators of this pedagogy are more apt to acknowledging giftedness in minority students due to their familiarity with diverse language, culture, and ways of thinking (Ford, Harris, Tyson, & Trotman, 2002). This study examined the relationship between elementary principals' knowledge and perceptions of culturally responsive teaching and the proportionality of African American students' enrollment in AIG. Chapter II of the dissertation explores the theoretical framework and supporting literature in greater detail.

Rationale and Significance of the Study

In considering equity and accessibility to quality teaching and instruction, initially, many may not think of access to gifted education for African American students. As a society with a history of segregation, we as Americans may frequently compare the bare bones of an entity and simply see if all races, genders, and people from various religious and sexual orientation groups have access to these privileges at face value. If so, we think of the "playing fields" as being equal and just; but are they? When it comes to employment and gender differences, we tend to think that if a company hires both men and women, it provides equal access and its policies are nonbiased and fair. However, women do not receive the same level of pay for performing the same job duties as their male counterparts (*Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., Inc.*, 2007; Willborn, 1985, p. 809). Similarly, we may believe that if you see at least one brown face employed in an establishment then we assume the employer is diverse and offers the same

employment, pay, and promotion opportunities to minorities as they do to Whites. However, with deeper insight into hiring and promotion criteria, it is possible that policies and prerequisites prohibit minorities from accessing these privileges due to the mandate of prior work experience, certain educational criteria, etc. In a culturally unjust system, it is possible that minority candidates were not afforded prior work and educational opportunities that would enable them to compete/receive the same hiring and promotional access at the same rates as their White male counterparts (Willborn, 1985, p. 809). Yet, at face value, all appear to be equal. This is an example of disparate impact and the same set of circumstances might apply to gifted education.

It is not good enough to say that since some African American children are identified as gifted learners, then as a whole, gifted education programs are fair and unbiased. On the contrary, gifted education programs must be scrutinized for its fair and equitable access as was done in the employment market. Continuous examination into gifted education is necessary to assure that policies and procedures are truly fair, proportionate, and impartial in offering equitable access to gifted African American and minority learners at the same rates as gifted White learners. While there is no federal entity to assure this, the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) is an organization involving parents, educators, and community members that conduct and support research on gifted education in the United States. The organization provides resources relative to professional development, advocacy, and collaboration with agencies across the country that offer assistance to parents and schools concerning gifted curriculum and instruction. The organization supplies parents, educators, and community members with working knowledge geared to improve gifted instruction through educational policy, practice, professional development, and research.

Currently there is not a federal agency that gathers statistical data on gifted education nationwide (National Association of Gifted Children, 2008). Gifted education is a state and local agency initiative. However, NAGC estimates that the U.S. has roughly three million gifted students; a projection from the 1972 *Maryland Report to Congress* (National Association of Gifted Children, 2008). This estimate suggests that six percent of the nation's students from K-12 are identifiably gifted (National Association of Gifted Children, 2008). In the 2014-2015 school year, North Carolina enrolled 1,470,127 students (National Association for Gifted Children, n.d. b). According to the National Association for Gifted Children, 180,477 of these students were identified as gifted (National Association for Gifted Children, n.d. b). It is in the identification and tracking process that the disproportionality of African American students in AIG in comparison to the number of African American students school-wide is seen.

African American students who are misidentified or not identified at all due to culturally biased practices and assessments, are at risk of being low tracked for the remainder of their academic careers (Blanchett, 2006). This practice threatens the success and propensity for African American students to compete academically and occupationally with White counterparts. This occurrence further disenfranchises African American citizens and continues the social injustice African Americans have faced before the establishment of the United States. By investigating the relationship between a) elementary principals' knowledge and perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and b) the proportionate identification of African American students in gifted education programs, this study extended the level of knowledge in this area. Moving forward, the next few sections briefly expose the research questions, hypotheses, methodology, assumptions and limitations of the study. Afterwards, a description of gifted education programs and terms is provided.

Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Methodology

The following section outlines the research questions (RQ), hypotheses and methodology used in this research. This section is brief and serves as a clear and concise introduction into the execution of the study as greater details are provided in Chapter III.

Research Questions (RQ1, RQ2, RQ3)

- **RQ1:** *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices?*
- **RQ2:** *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?*
- **RQ3:** *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?*

Hypotheses (H1, H2, H3)

- H1: Regarding research question 1 (RQ1) it was hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices.
- H2: In research question 2 (RQ2) it was hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG.

- H3: Regarding research question 3 (RQ3), it was hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG

Methodology

Information letters describing the research study and the assessment tool were distributed via email to central North Carolina superintendents and designees with a district African American student population of at least 25%. After permission was obtained from approved districts, mass emails were provided from the researcher to each superintendent/designee to be forwarded via email to elementary school principals soliciting study participation. Invitations included the purpose of the study, IRB status, privacy and confidentiality clause, and the request to completion an electronic questionnaire by selecting the provided hyperlink (see Appendix B). The study used the *Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching*, an assessment adapted from Dr. Kebbler Williams study (2014). Permission to use the assessment was obtained from Dr. Williams through written and oral communication (see Appendix D). This assessment was chosen due to its a) ability to measure cultural responsiveness, b) relativity to state standards, c) success in achieving reliability and validity in a former study.

Research Assumptions

In the presence of disparate impact, it was logical to assume that school principals provide leadership and restructuring that counter bias educational practices. Though it was logical to also assume teachers, counselors, and gifted education specialists spearheaded AIG, it was suspected that school principals still possessed a working knowledge of the policies and procedures used to govern and execute gifted services. Furthermore, it was presumed by the

researcher that principals had a working knowledge of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) practices which were somehow connected to the proportionality in gifted enrollment. Another assumption was that principals were aware of which teachers used CRT in instruction as evidenced by lesson plans, classroom walkthroughs, instructional observations, teacher engaged professional development trainings, and data obtained from subject and grade level professional learning communities (PLCs). The researcher also suspected principals to be aware of student demographic data schoolwide and for the AIG population. It was expected that principals understood gifted identification criteria such as required assessments, parent notification methods, seasons of enrollment, gifted education preparation opportunities prior to identification, etc. in order to speak to teachers' efforts to increase the proportionality of gifted African American enrollment. Finally, the researcher supposed that principals directly or indirectly supervised all gifted aspects of recruitment, selection, and retention to accurately report on the level of culturally responsive teaching and its relevance to the gifted proportionality.

The rationale behind these assumptions was a simple link between belief and action on behalf of school principals. It was reasonable to assume that if an educator supports an initiative, then evidence of that belief should be present in the daily execution of curriculum and instruction at that principal's school. Therefore, results were expected to yield a statistically significant relationship between culturally responsive teaching practices, AIG standards, and the proportionality of African American students in AIG. Consequently, it seemed reasonable to hypothesize that knowledgeable/supportive principals of CRT, executed action plans and systemic strategies that produced equitable access to gifted education for African Americans.

Limitations and Delimitations

The most impact limitation of the study was the small sample size. The study was limited to elementary school principals in central North Carolina. These stipulations left a possible sample size of 387 people. However, the school districts which allowed the study to survey its principals reduced the possible sample size from 387 to 60 possible participants. Also, this study's focus was at the elementary level. Therefore, results of the study may not be generalizable to secondary schools or the principals that govern them. Furthermore, the study's focus was on African American students and results may not be representative of other minority groups. Aside from these logistics, there are also research limitations surrounding the variables discussed and explored in the research study.

Figure 1 illustrates the Cyclic Framework of the factors contributing to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education leading to disparate impact. The model identified four components, recruitment, selection, educators' perceptions, and ability tracking. Each component of the figure outlines factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education. This study was limited to discussing three of the four components; recruitment, educators' perceptions, and ability tracking. As illustrated in Figure 1, assessment bias is a large piece of the selection process in gifted education. However, due to the popularity of this topic in several research studies, the literature review provides a brief discussion on assessment bias and its impact on the enrollment of African American students in gifted education. However, the literature review will discuss ability tracking, educator's perceptions of African American students and achievement, African American students' level of preparation for gifted curricula, and parental involvement for African American students. Along with test bias, these four factors have been identified in

current literature as contributing factors to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted programs. Insight into these four factors, are still respected by this researcher as important and noteworthy though less researched in current literature. In conclusion of Chapter I, the next section provides the description of gifted programs and the definition of key terms used throughout the study.

The Under Enrollment of African American Students in Gifted Education

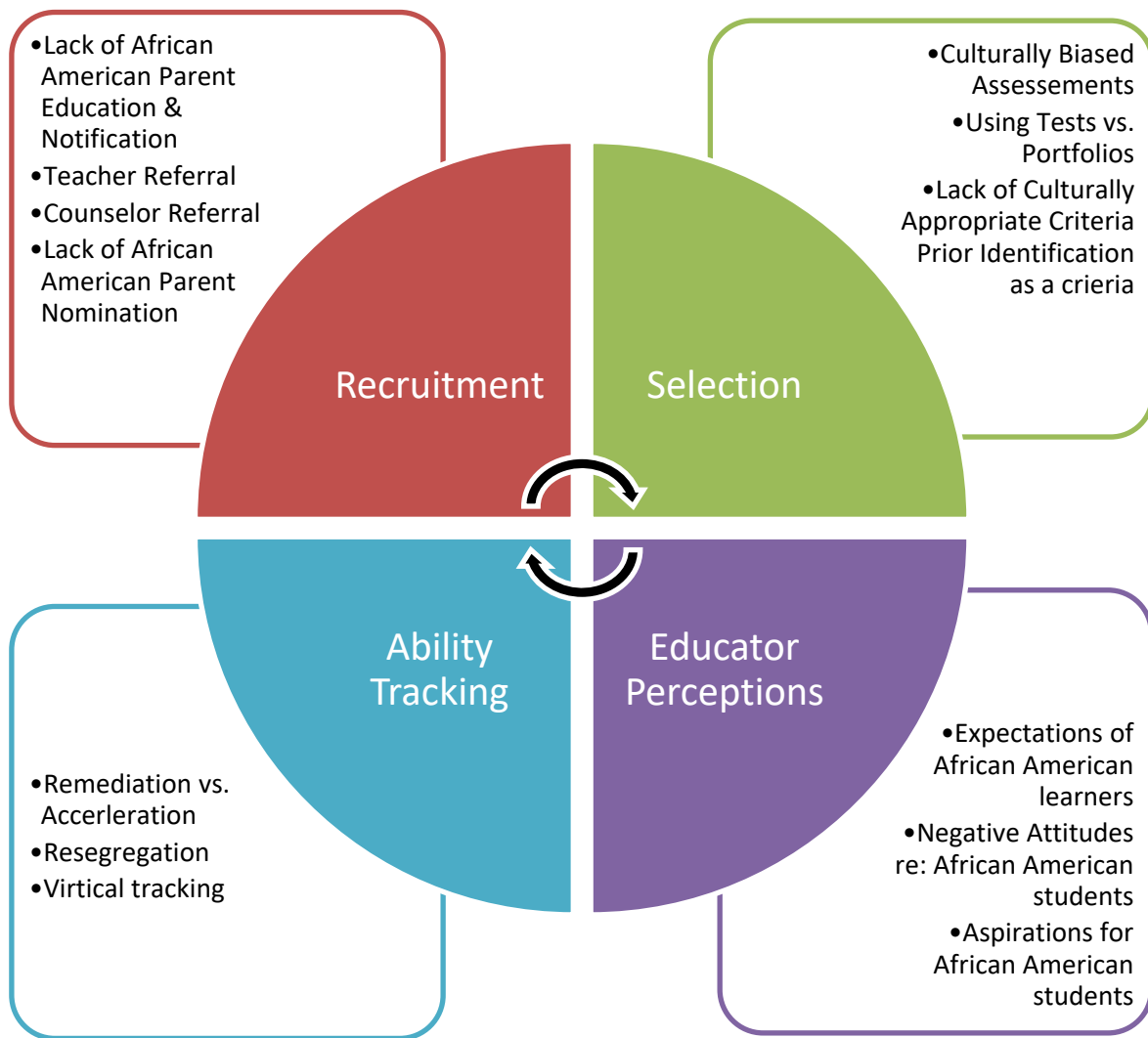


Figure 1. Cyclical Factors Leading to the Disparate Impact of African American Students in Gifted Education. Inspired by Ladson-Billings' Critical Race Theory (1995).

Description of Gifted Programs

North Carolina will be the state of examination for gifted education. The state was chosen by the researcher due to residential and occupational knowledge of the North Carolina public school system. The following programs operate in North Carolina's gifted education system. Some programs are concentrated in secondary education only. While, this study is limited to the elementary level, these programs are discussed in the research and literature for contextual knowledge of gifted tracking. Though the research study will focus on elementary principals and their schools, the literature supports additional problems at the secondary level. Data regarding gifted problems in secondary schooling will be acknowledged in the literature review because it supports the notion that AIG is a continuum and not solely confined to the elementary level.

- *Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG)* - A North Carolina gifted education program. Academically or intellectually gifted (AIG) students perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experiences or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both the intellectual areas and specific academic fields. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated educational services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular educational program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor (North Carolina General Statutes, Article 9B, § 115C-150.5).
- *Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)* - is a college readiness system for students in elementary through secondary education. AVID is designed to increase school wide learning and performance; especially among first year graduates, low-income

students, and students of color. AVID is a researched-based curriculum designed to teach students critical thinking, math, and literacy skills (AVID, 2016).

- *International Baccalaureate (IB)* - The International Baccalaureate program is a transnational curriculum awarding educational and occupational certification in 144 countries. IB was founded in 1968 in Geneva, Switzerland. The programs are known as IB World Schools or Candidate Schools serving students from ages 3 to 19 with curriculum in the Primary Years Programme and the Diploma Program. IB offers 157 subjects under Language, Individuals and Societies, Experimental Sciences, Mathematics, and the Arts (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2005-2016). Students may receive high school and/or college credit with an IB diploma of completion via International Education and Mindedness (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2005-2016). Presently, the U.S. ranks number one in program registration with fifty-five percent of all IB seeking students (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2005-2016). Ninety-one percent of U.S. IB World Schools are public institutions with 60 schools belonging to North Carolina. The IB curriculum is incorporated in many AIG programs across the state of North Carolina. Students are screened for suitability and must be able to afford the cost associated with course registration. IB entails appropriate curriculums in elementary, middle, and high schools.
- *STEM*- An educational program concentrated in the discipline areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

Definition of Terms

The following section defines the most important terms used in the research study. These definitions are provided to relay the explicit meaning of the most important and recurring terms used throughout the research study.

- *Ability Tracking*- refers to student grouping and course placement as a result of academic ability and past achievement on course material and state assessments.
- *Achievement Gap*- “when one group of students (such as, students grouped by race/ethnicity, gender) outperforms another group and the difference in average scores for the two groups is statistically significant” (NAEP, 2015b).
- *African American*- refers to a person who culturally and ethnically derives from African ancestry (used interchangeably with the term “African American”).
- *AIG Standards*- defining statement articulating the expectations for quality, comprehensive, and effective local AIG programs and relates to the categories addressed in Article 9B (North Carolina General Statutes, Article 9B, § 115C-150.5-8).
- *Black*- refers to individuals who appear or describe themselves as African American, Afro American, African or Caribbean; interchangeable with the term African American.
- *Caucasian*- refers to a person who culturally and ethnically derive from European ancestry.
- *Critical Race Theory*- Critical Race Theory is a comprehensive framework that investigates race, history, and social influence on the treatment of African American Americans. The theory focuses on the societal differences between groups of people based on the role of race and culture (Bernal-Delgado, 2002).

- *Cultural Competence*- the alignment of personal and organizational values with inclusive cultural practices (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2009).
- *Cultural Proficiency*- is the personal conviction to see one's self (or representing organization) as the catalyst for social democracy (Lindsey et al., 2009).
- *Culturally Responsive Teaching*- using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them (Williams, 2014).
- *Disparate Impact*- The theory of disparate impact refers to policies that appear neutral but has a disproportionate, adverse impact on individuals of a protected class based on race, color, gender, nationality, family status, disability, or religion (Long & Hanchey, 2015, p. 8).
- *Disproportionality*- refers to the “overrepresentation” and “under-representation” of a particular demographic group in special or gifted education programs relative to the enrollment of this group in the overall student population (National Association for Bilingual Education, 2002).
- *White*- refers to individuals of European decent; interchangeable with the term Caucasian.

Organization of the Research

The dissertation is organized into three chapters. In Chapter I the reader was exposed to the broad context of the United States regular education system along with a historical context of the gifted education setting nationally and in the North Carolina public school system. The statement of the problem, purpose of the study, and introduction to the conceptual framework guided the reader to the significance of the research study. Chapter I also includes the definition of gifted programs and terms. Next, Chapter II will provide details on the theoretical framework

used to evaluate and analyze data from the research study. Additionally, Chapter II details the historical and legal context of education, and an in depth review of critical race theory, culturally responsive teaching, disproportionality, and disparate impact. Finally, Chapter II provides an extensive literature review. Subsequently, Chapter III reports the research questions, methodology, assumptions of the study, limitations and delimitations along with data collection and analysis followed by the results of the study in Chapter IV and a discussion on the results in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In Chapter I the researcher introduced the context of gifted education in the public school sector. Information was shared on gifted education through the Jacob K. Javits Act as well as the start of gifted programs in North Carolina (the research state). The researcher revealed the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the foundation for the theoretical framework used to analyze the study, and the rationale and significance of the study. Finally, Chapter I concluded with a description of gifted education programs, the definition of terms, and the research questions, hypotheses, and methodology. Moving forward, Chapter II will disclose the historical and legal context that surround public education for African American learners. Also, the theoretical framework used to evaluate and analyze data will be discussed in detail. Chapter II will provide an extensive literature review focused on elementary gifted education with emphasis on the underrepresentation of African American students. To strengthen this section, there will be highlights of prominent gifted education cases at the secondary level as well. Most research studies reviewed in Chapter II were conducted in the past ten years. However, some earlier literature is included to expose educational trends and longitudinal data.

Though gifted education is not a new practice, African American access to gifted education is relatively recent. African American students have only been integrated into White public schools since the mid to late 1960s despite desegregation mandates resulting from *Brown v. Board of Education* a decade prior. The literature exposed in this review will be examined

thematically and in chronological order to provide a timeline of events. Though the focus of this study is on gifted education at the elementary level, literature discussing gifted education at the secondary level is incorporated, exposing the long-term effects and significance of student tracking beyond elementary school. Some of the literature will come from nationally conducted studies on gifted education while others are situated in the research state of North Carolina. Through investigation, current literature has identified five major factors contributing to the disproportionality of African American students in gifted programs. Research has named ability tracking, teacher perceptions, and the under-preparation of African American students, parental involvement, and test bias as culprits to the disparity. As discussed in Chapter I, four of these factors will be evaluated in greater detail, while the most common factor (test bias) will be briefly reviewed. Prior to this literature review, a discussion on cultural race theory, culturally responsive teaching, disproportionality, and disparate impact will take place as the focal lens of the research study. The purpose of this arrangement is to link gifted literature to the systemic disenfranchisement of African American learners in public schools nationwide. The following section begins the conversation of public education and the African American experience as evidenced by noteworthy legal cases that have left significant stamps on American culture, history, and pedagogy.

Historical and Legal Context

There are several dated cases concerning the treatment of African American citizens in the United States' legal and educational systems such as *Roberts v. The City of Boston* (1849), *Freedmen's Bureau Act* (1866), *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), and *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents* (1950). However, the most prominent cases relevant to the research study are *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954 & 1955) and *Aaron v. Cooper* (1956 & 1957). These legal cases are

discussed to provide insight into the integration of African American students into the public education system. These cases are cornerstones to the experiences of African American citizens in the quest for equal educational opportunities. Relatively recent, these cases date back to the early 1950s during the movements and governance of Jim Crow laws. Each educational case will be discussed in the order of occurrence, providing a timeline of events. The next section will discuss *Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas et al.* (1954 & 1955), followed by *Aaron v. Cooper* (1956 & 1957).

Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas et al. (1954) consisted of four civil lawsuits filed because African American students were denied enrollment into an all-White public school. During the case, the Supreme Court found that segregated facilities deprived African American students the right to an equal education. The Court deemed segregation to have a negative psychological influence on African American students due to an inferiority complex. The case ruled that segregation was no longer a legalized practice, and the order to desegregate public schools was made. However, in *Brown v. Board of Education II* (1955), school districts pleaded with the Supreme Court to revise the desegregation order, providing them with relief from the prior mandate. The Court responded with an order for public schools to desegregate with “all deliberate speed”. This action, still required the desegregation of public schools, yet without a definitive deadline date as to when desegregation must take place. Due to an unidentified timeframe to desegregate, public schools across the nation continued to operate under separation practices for more than ten years after the initial ruling. Consequently, in 1956 Americans witnessed a glimpse of what desegregation would look like in Little Rock, Arkansas.

In 1956, Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas was scheduled to desegregate and allow African American students their right to enroll in an all-White school. Instead, the school

board approved a desegregation plan to finalize the process of desegregation by the year 1963. The ruling caused uproar in the African American and White communities. Still, African American students reported to Central High School demanding enrollment. Gooden (2004) described the feelings of the African American community as “rightfully outraged” as they were taunted and attacked each day they attempted to attend classes at Central High School. The chaos resulted in the lawsuit of *Aaron v. Cooper* (1956) in which African American parents demanded an overturn decision to the school board’s desegregation plan, requesting immediate enrollment rights for African American students. In the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1957, the school board’s desegregation plan was upheld. As a result, the school board decided to withdraw all African American students who were admitted to Central High School and postpone the desegregation plan for another two and half years. Due to “all deliberate speed” identified in *Brown v. Board II*, this decision was supported by the Court as well.

As demonstrated, equity and acceptance into a dominant all-White educational system has been an ongoing struggle for African Americans to achieve. This depiction of the African American experience is central to the forward movement in the United States as it relates to social justice and equality. It is imperative in understanding today’s African American student learners and the policies that govern their education. Additionally, attention to this matter may highlight common unjust treatment for other minority populations. Understanding this notion is a necessity if federal and state educational policy aims to create learning environments that are rigorous, globally competitive, and equitable to all students despite race, gender, and socioeconomic status as alluded to in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In addition to the general education setting, a historical review considering equitable access, retention, and satisfactory performance of minority students in gifted education is significant as well. In fact,

African American students are the leading minority group with the highest disproportionality seen in gifted enrollment (See Tables 2-6). It has been expressed that the underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted education is a systematic approach to re-segregation (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In response, the following section will describe critical race theory and its connection to the puzzle of race and education.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory is a comprehensive framework that investigates race, history, and social influence on the treatment of African American Americans. The theory focuses on the societal differences between groups of people based on the role of race and culture (Bernal-Delgado, 2002). The use of Critical Race Theory allows the research to be viewed from a racially fused perspective; forcing observers to consider the roles that race and culture play in the grand treatment of minority groups. Research discussed in the literature review has identified five factors that impact the lack of proportionality of African American students in gifted education 1) ability tracking 2) teacher perceptions 3) the under-preparation of African American students 4) parental involvement and 5) test bias. Current research on these factors used elements of Critical Race Theory to investigate the issues of African American students in gifted education at large. Before reviewing the research in Chapter II, the history and application of Critical Race Theory and its role in evaluating equitable educational practices for African American learners is presented.

Critical Race Theory was established through the Critical Legal Studies (CLS) movement led by Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman in the 1970's (Dixson, 2007). Bell and Freeman supposed that race and racism were connected to the social inequities seen in the judicial system on a societal level (Delgado, 1995; Ladson-Billings 1998). CLS was used to examine the role of

legislation as a catalyst for legalized oppression (Yosso, 2005). Since, Critical Race Theory has evolved into a conglomerate of racial analysis representing an array of minority groups. The theory has been adopted as a means to view racial injustice for Asians, Latinos, Native Americans, ethnic tribes, and women (Yosso, 2005). Critical Race Theory is often used as a framework to illuminate injustice and inequality in many areas including education. Gloria Ladson-Billings has been credited as a trailblazer for ushering Critical Race Theory into the realm of public education since the early 1990s (Dixson, 2007).

Ladson-Billings and William Tate drew close attention to Critical Race Theory in education as a property right (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This perspective incorporated “Whiteness” as property and aimed to alter education practices for students of color from a policy standpoint (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In a research study, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) examined the differences in course offerings between poor inner-city districts of color and upper echelon White suburban institutions. Results indicated that disadvantaged schools offered fewer gifted, Honors, Advanced Placement, foreign language, and elective courses than advantaged schools. Additionally, upper echelon White suburban institutions offered a rigorous curriculum with greater quality and marketability than poor inner-city districts of color. Suburban schools offered biochemistry, film, business statistics, Greek, and computer programming. Inner-city schools offered basic education courses only. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) also discussed additional funding sources provided by property taxes from upper class communities. They termed this occurrence as “opportunity learning” which enabled well-to-do communities to afford educational opportunities that were not available to poor students.

Critical Race Theory in Educational Literature

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) went on to recognize the term “double consciousness” when describing the expectation of African American knowledge and dual participation in White and African American cultures simultaneously. These authors quoted Woodson’s *Miseducation of the Negro* to clarify the term. The term was defined as:

The same educational process which inspires and stimulates the oppressor with the thought that he is everything and has accomplished everything worthwhile, depresses and crushes at the same time the spark of genius in the Negro by making him feel that his race does not amount to much and never will measure up to the standards of other people (Woodson, 1933, p. 13).

Therefore, African Americans must learn, relate, communicate, and apply knowledge to two cultural worlds as a dual member of two different societies; thus, creating a “double consciousness”. Without proper instruction on how to navigate these arenas, African Americans (especially students) could be predisposed to social failure. As a counter, Critical Race Theory continues to promote racially sensitive epistemologies that stress the importance of interdisciplinary approaches, experimental knowledge, and challenge central ideologies that deem White middle class values as superior (Bernal-Delgado, 2002). Followers of Critical Race Theory acknowledge racism and commit to social justice as a way to ensure minorities’ equitable access to societal rights (Bernal-Delgado, 2002). In the educational system, Carter’s (2008) work on critical race consciousness connected race and history to the education of African American students as described in Woodson’s quote.

Carter’s study found that African American students valued education and viewed it as a means to combat systemic racism (Carter, 2008). Many students acknowledged the hardships

their ancestors endured to gain equal access to educational opportunities for all African American citizens. The study revealed that most average to high achieving African American students identified critical race consciousness as an incentive to perform well. Students reported adversity and racial stereotypes as academic motivators (Carter, 2008). Because of this, students were inspired to work diligently to dispel typecasts that suggested intellectual inferiority and lower academic capabilities for African American students. Carter's work encouraged educators to openly acknowledge race discrimination and racism with African American students. In turn, African American students acknowledged White teachers who openly discussed racial inequality as teachers who "care" (Carter, 2008). The open dialogue between teachers and students was said to serve as a counter-narrative for African American learners to achieve (Carter, 2008). Carter's plea to educators to include cultural conversations in curriculum endorsed culturally responsive teaching. The premise is that educators might recognize giftedness more often and lessen enrollment gaps for African American students if they engaged in the cultural context of minority students.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

In this study, culturally responsive teaching (CRT) refers to a teaching strategy that acknowledges the experiences, cultures, and ways of knowing from non-middle class White learners in the realm of curriculum and instruction. Culturally responsive teaching is a platform for the thoughts and experiences of minority learners to be accepted as proficiencies (opposed to deficiencies) in the subjects of language usage, grammar, and mathematics (Kozleski, 2010). Culturally responsive educators use research to illuminate the importance of race and culture in education. CRT instruction can educate and prepare minority students for advanced academics using rigorous, culturally based curriculum.

Pioneer, Geneva Gay defines culturally responsive teaching as “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (Gay, 2010, p. 31). Gay explained the pedagogy as “a means for improving achievement by teaching diverse students through their own cultural filters” (Gay, 2013, p. 50). Gay has been discussing this educational paradigm since the 1970’s. Her work has evolved from the root focus of incorporating the experiences, thoughts, ideas, social contributions and work samples of diverse people into the consciousness of educators, to assisting educators in acquiring actual resources and competencies that are culturally sound to improve teaching and learning. Gay (2013) made it clear that in her work, her “priorities are race, culture, and ethnicity as they relate to underachieving students of color and marginalized groups in K–12 schools” (p.52). Educators are encouraged to value culture and recognize race and ethnicity in teaching material, exploring concepts, observing and relaying information, and problem solving.

Gay’s work described how her racial identity as an African American shaped the way she empathized and analyzed educational realities of minority children. Similarly, culturally responsive teaching pedagogy inspires educators to acknowledge their lens in which they see the world, but most importantly, acknowledge the lens that their students of color are looking through as they see the world. In this acknowledgement, culturally responsive teaching practices would use resources to enhance material, making it culturally relevant to marginalized students. This phenomenon is important in that it brings educators and minority students to a common place to then initiate and maintain the learning process. In her work, Gay quoted Don Hamachek (1999, p.208) who said, “Teachers teach not only a curriculum of study, they also become part of it. The subject matter they teach is mixed with the content of their personalities”. Gay also

challenged educators to stop perpetuating negative beliefs that minorities fail to thrive because they don't want to "act White" or that minorities are from dysfunctional homes that prohibit them from engaging in education. Along with Gay, other authors have researched culturally responsive teaching and its impact on the academics of African American students.

Ford (2010) described cultural responsiveness as, "responding proactively and empathetically to appeals, efforts, and influences" (p.50). Ford expressed that culturally responsive classrooms were student-centered arenas in which teachers "understand, respect, and meet the needs" of diverse students in an effort to eliminate educational barriers to academic achievement. Ford (2010) stated that a student-centered classroom is not achievable if culture is eliminated from its context. A notion similar to Carter's, in which both authors endorse open and routine cultural conversations to achieve trusting relationships which connect minority students and teachers in the classroom. Ford (2010) argued that due to the majority of teachers being White (83%) and female (75%), increased cultural awareness and sensitivity was necessary to gain equity for minority student populations.

In culturally responsive teaching, teachers are seen as game changers. Ford (2010) stated that in doing so, teachers may challenge how giftedness is measured by incorporating cultural perspectives. Additionally, Ford raised several questions to encourage teachers to think consciously about their teaching philosophy. Educators were asked to consider strategies that decreased bias in the process of gifted identification and decision making. Also, she posed questions such as, "How do teachers build effective relationships [with culturally diverse students]? What instructional strategies are compatible with their [culturally diverse students] learning? What are ways teachers can make learning meaningful and relevant [to culturally diverse students]?" Finally Ford (2010) asks "Do all students have the opportunity to be

evaluated in ways that are compatible with how they learn and communicate?” Like Ford, Kozleski (2010) took a similar approach to defining culturally responsive teaching. Yet, she placed emphasis on the ‘teach the teacher’ modality to achieve CRT goals.

Kozleski challenged teachers to confront personal bias toward minority groups to sustain student participation and achievement (Kozleski, 2010). Kozleski urged educators to “negotiate new standards and norms that acknowledge the differences and similarities among and between individuals and groups” (2010, p. 2). An example of this was shared in the text concerning the tendency for U.S. instructors to teach western expansion from the perspective of White settlers as pioneers and politicians who amazingly established a new world. Yet, American teachers and historians routinely neglect to emphasize the importance of seeing Native Americans as massacred victims, whose civilization was demolished for the greater good of White pilgrims. Kozleski (2010) explained that culturally responsive teaching allows mandated material to be taught from the lens of indigenous people which expands the consumer’s point of view. Kozleski (2010) held culturally responsive teaching responsible for offering “the possibility for transformational knowledge that leads to socially responsible action” (p. 3). Kozleski’s work emphasized the need for teachers to communicate high expectations, interact with diverse communities, participate in educational reform and facilitate learning and student engagement (Kozleski, 2010). Prior to the work of Kozleski and Ford, Wlodkowski and Ginsberg focused on ways to strengthen student engagement (a principle of CRT) in the classroom in the mid 1990’s.

According to Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (1995), culture and experience shapes one’s emotional response to motivation and work ethic. The research discussed how culture socializes one’s coping skills to adverse circumstances. For example, the text described how one’s feelings toward the difficulty of a task is actually a social response to what s/he has learned from cultural

values. Furthermore, when individuals become frustrated with a task, their cultural experiences innately prepare them to respond to the task by quitting, continuing with determination, or refusing to acknowledge the experience as frustrating and continue the work with joy. This example was given to illustrate how teachers can either motivate students from culturally diverse backgrounds to engage in their own learning, or allow frustration to cause them to quit.

Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (1995) explained how culturally responsive teaching can be used to connect students with academic material; and through the connection, motivate students to take ownership of the education process. “Intrinsic Motivation” was identified as a culturally responsive framework to actively engage students in learning instead of relying on external factors such as grades and grade point averages to motivate culturally diverse students. To accomplish intrinsic motivation, educators were guided through structures and procedures that establish inclusion, develop attitude, enhance meaning, and engender competence (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). Some of the intrinsic motivators were identified as creating ground rules for student learning communities, allowing student input on class activities, using critical questioning to develop problem-posing models, connecting assessments to students’ frames of reference, and continual critiques of tests and testing formats that are culturally biased (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). Eleven years later, Kea, Campbell-Whatley, and Richards (2006) charged teacher education programs with the responsibility of training teachers on the importance of multicultural pedagogy and all that it entails.

Kea et al. (2006) urged teacher education programs (TEPs) to actively incorporate cultural responsive teaching in teacher education and training. The research listed three levels of curriculum transformation: exclusive, inclusive, and transformed. First, the exclusive level limits discussions on diversity to food, folklore, fun, and fashion that are typical in various cultures

(Kea et al., 2006). This level used traditional lecture style to illustrate diversity using mainstream experiences and stereotypes to summarize life experiences of diverse groups. Second, the inclusive level stuck to the exclusive level format but added additional diverse content including social views and reviewing literature from authors with diverse viewpoints. The style of inclusive teaching continued to be teacher led. The third curriculum transformation was the transformed level. This level challenged traditional points of view and was facilitated through student-centered instruction. Instructors at this level were to use reflective projects and assignments to solicit student self-evaluation. Students were required to share perspectives and engage in inter-relational activities that incorporated group participation and problem solving. Instructors at this level were to assign work that required application and the explanation of values. To obtain a transformed curriculum, Kea et al. (2006, p. 8) suggested the following:

- Partnerships between TEPs and urban schools must be established
- Teachers in training be required to engage in community field experience that differ from ones' own ethnicity and socioeconomic background
- Practicum and internship experiences must take place in culturally diverse classrooms and communities
- Develop host sites that allow teachers in training to live in culturally diverse communities while completing student teaching
- Maintain a buddy mentoring system for pre-service teachers to be placed with cooperating teachers [of culturally responsive teaching]

In conclusion, this section provided multiple definitions and application styles of culturally responsive teaching. The literature reviewed served as a holistic perspective of what culturally responsive teaching looks like, how it works and influences student outcomes, and

why this particular pedagogy is qualified to increase gifted proportionality for African American students. In an effort to further explore the effects of CRT, a review of disproportionality is necessary and provided in the following section as part of the foundation of this study.

Disproportionality

It is important to acknowledge that gifted and talented programs are a subgroup of special education services in public education. Two additional subgroups of special education consists of remedial programs and curriculum for English Language Learners (ELL). Research has shown an overwhelming overflow of African American students represented in remedial programs (Harry, 1994; Blanchett, 2006; Klinger & Harry, 2006; Sullivan & Artiles, 2011) with extreme low enrollment in gifted programs (See Tables 2-6). In this study, gifted and remedial enrollment is explored due to the similarities research has recognized in the referral and identification process for African American students in both systems. The information seen appears to have some overlap and will be presented later in Chapter II. Sullivan and Artiles (2011) explained the disproportionality of minority students in remedial education to be related to racial inequity in the societal structure. This research explored the educational, economic, political, and social schemas that compose social stratification. Stratification is defined as “patterned and differential distribution of resources, life chances, and costs/benefits among groups of the population” (Sullivan & Artiles, 2011, p. 1529).

Beth Harry, an educational leader and researcher, used disproportionality as a theoretical perspective to analyze minority students in special education (Harry, 1994; Klinger & Harry, 2006). She used disproportionality to explain the lack of cultural competencies that public educators practice to over refer students of color to remedial programs (Klinger and Harry, 2006). However, some research found that disproportionality did not apply to all demographic

groups. On the contrary, Asian and Pacific Islander students were overrepresented in gifted education programs and less likely to be referred to remedial education programs (National Education Association, 2007). The National Education Association found that 7.5 percent of White students and 9.9 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander students were nationally selected for gifted education programs (National Education Association, 2007). Meanwhile, 3 percent of African American students, 3.6 percent of Hispanic/Latino students, and 4.9 percent of American Indian students were nationally selected for gifted education programs (National Education Association, 2007). Thus, African American students were least selected for gifted services.

Nationally, there is significant disproportionality in the representation of African American students in gifted education programs. In fact, this discrepancy is more profound with African American learners than any other racial group. Tables 2 through 6 in the following section demonstrates this occurrence. Table 2 exhibits the total number of students enrolled in public schools in the U.S. and North Carolina (the state of research interest) by racial demographic group. Table 3 represents the total number of students enrolled in public schools in the U.S. and North Carolina in percentage form by racial demographic group. Table 4 shows the total number of U.S. students participating in gifted education by racial demographic group while Table 5 notes the actual percentage of each value stated in Table 4. Finally, Table 6 indicates the total percentage of the U.S. gifted and talented student population enrolled in public schools in 2006-2007 by race/ethnicity and state or jurisdiction.

Data obtained in Tables 2, 4, and 5 derived from the most recent statistics reported in the U.S. Department of Education' Common Core of Data and Digest of Education Statistics (Sable J., Noel, A., & Hoffman, L., 2008; Snyder, T., and Dillow, S., 2015). These tables were simplified to display the information pertinent to the research study only and does not include

information from other states or about other demographic groups. The figures provided in each table were taken directly from the Digest of Education Statistics report; however, standard deviations are not provided but can be found in the original work which is cited. Data revealed in Tables 3 and 6 reflect a percentage table designed by the researcher using the numerical values depicted in Tables 2 and 4. Percentages in each racial demographic category were hand calculated using the equation: $\frac{IS}{OF} \times \frac{\%}{100}$, whereas the number of students in a particular racial demographic group were divided by the total number of students. That numerical value was then multiplied by 100 to find the percentage that racial demographic group represented amongst the total number of students enrolled in the U.S. and North Carolina. Following this section is an explanation of Tables 2 through 6.

Table 2
Public School Students Enrolled by Race/Ethnicity in 2006-07

State/ Jurisdiction	No. of Students Enrolled in Public Schools	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native
United States	48,504,876	27,394,435	8,288,264	9,950,245	2,282,149	589,783
North Carolina	1,399,361	803,979	408,189	134,420	32,042	20,731

Note. Student data adapted from “Public Elementary and Secondary School Student Enrollment and Staff From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2006-07 First Look (NCES 2009-305, Table 2),” by Sable J., Noel, A., and Hoffman, L., 2008, *U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics*.

Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009305.pdf>.

Details may not sum to totals due to rounding in the original sources.

Table 3

Percentage of Public School Students Enrolled by Race/Ethnicity in 2006-07

State/Jurisdiction	Percentage of					
	Students Enrolled in Public Schools	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native
United States	100%	56.5%	17.1%	20.5%	4.7%	1.2%
North Carolina	100% (2.9% of U.S.A Student Population)	57.5%	29.2%	9.6%	2.3%	1.5%

Note. Percentage calculations derive from “Public Elementary and Secondary School Student Enrollment and Staff

From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2006-07 First Look (NCES 2009-305, Table 2),” by Sable J., Noel, A., and Hoffman, L., 2008, *U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics*.

Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015011.pdf>.

Details may not sum to totals due to rounding in the original sources.

Table 4

Gifted and Talented Students Enrolled by Race/Ethnicity in 2006

State/Jurisdiction	No. of					
	Gifted and Talented Students in Public Schools	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native
United States	3,236,990	2,191,210	296,150	414,060	304,220	31,360
North Carolina	149,000	120,700	18,090	4,040	5,150	1,710

Note. Student data adapted from “Digest of Education Statistics 2013 (NCES 2015-011, Table 204.80, p. 110),”

by Snyder, T., and Dillow, S., 2015, *U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education*

Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015011.pdf>.

Details may not sum to totals due to rounding in the original sources.

Table 5

Percentage of Gifted and Talented Students Enrolled by Race/Ethnicity in 2006

State/Jurisdiction	Percentage of Gifted and Talented Students in Public Schools	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native
United States	6.7%	8.0%	3.6%	4.2%	13.1%	5.2%
North Carolina	10.8%	15.4%	4.3%	3.1%	17.3%	N/A

Note. Percentage calculations derive from “Public Elementary and Secondary School Student Enrollment and Staff

From the Common Core of Data: School Year 2006-07 First Look (NCES 2009-305, Table 2),” by Sable J., Noel, A., and Hoffman, L., 2008, *U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics*.

Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015011.pdf>.

Details may not sum to totals due to rounding in the original sources. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009305.pdf.aszsw>

Table 6

Demographics of Gifted and Talented Student by Race/Ethnicity 2006-07

State/Jurisdiction	Percentage of Gifted and Talented Students in Public Schools	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native
United States	100%	67.7%	9.1%	12.8%	9.4%	.97%
North Carolina	100%	81%	12.1%	2.7%	3.5%	1.1%

Note. Percentage calculations from “Digest of Education Statistics 2013 (NCES 2015-011, Table 204.80, p. 110),” by Snyder, T., and Dillow, S., 2015, *U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education*

Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015011.pdf>.

Details may not sum to totals due to rounding in the original sources.

Explanation of Tables 2 through 6

Tables 2 through 6 display the numerical and percentage values that represent the total number of students by race and location enrolled in United States' public schools in 2006-2007. These tables also provide the same information for the total number of students enrolled in gifted and talented programs. According to the data demonstrated in Tables 3 and 6, African American students represented 17.1 percent of the entire student population enrolled in a U.S. public primary or secondary school. As a whole, the United States of America only identified 6.7 percent of its entire student population as gifted and talented. Of this population, only 9.1 percent of students were African American, resulting in an 8 percent under-population of African American students enrolled in public schools nationwide compared to the amount of African American students enrolled in gifted education nationwide. On the contrary, 67.7 percent of the gifted and talented population was White while the percentage of White students nationwide was 56.5 percent. This data showed an 11.2 percent over-population of White students enrolled in public schools nationwide versus the amount of White students enrolled in gifted education nationwide. In the same tables, similar findings were shown with other races.

Similar to African American students, Hispanic students had a 7.7 percent under-enrollment in gifted and talented services while American Indian and Alaskan Native students were proportionately enrolled in gifted education compared to their rates of total student enrollment nationwide. Similar to White students, Asian American and Pacific Islander students were over-enrolled in gifted and talented programs compared to their rates of total student enrollment nationwide. Even more alarming discrepancies were seen in North Carolina. White students in North Carolina represented 81 percent of gifted and talented students and only 57.5 percent of the total North Carolina student population. African American students made up 12.1 percent of the states' gifted and talented population but made up 29.2 percent of the states' total

student population. Hispanics continued to experience a negative disproportionality, as well. However, the rate of Hispanic disproportionality was still less than that of the African American disproportionality. Similar to national data, American Indian and Alaskan Native students were enrolled in gifted education at a proportionate rate as their total student enrollment. Also similar to national data, Asian American and Pacific Islander students were again over-enrolled in gifted education.

Data shared in these tables illustrated the concept of disproportionality. In the research study, disproportionality was used to quantify the inequitable access African American learners had to gifted and talented programs. In an effort to understand the discrepancies in gifted enrollment, the research depended on culturally responsive teaching to explain how African American students could be overlooked and denied access to gifted education through the recruitment and identification process. Furthermore, the research study demonstrated how the lack of culturally responsive teaching could result in the disproportionality of African American students in gifted curricula. The following section reviewed literature on disparate impact. Data obtained from the North Carolina State University is presented in this section for its relevancy to how disparate impact is perceived in the research states' educational system.

Disparate Impact

Disparate impact refers to policies that appear neutral but has a disproportionate, adverse impact on individuals of a protected class based on race, color, gender, nationality, family status, disability, or religion (Long & Hanchey, 2015, p. 8). Disparate impact is an unintentional act that results in the discrimination of a protected class (NC State University, 2010) or use of a criterion that has a biased impact (Willborn, 1985). In order to measure disparate impact, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC's) *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Criteria* rely on the 80% rule to determine an adverse impact. For example, as demonstrated in

the NC State University Equal Employment Training model, if an agency required candidates to receive a passing score on an aptitude test, and 50% of White applicants passed while only 30% of African American applicants passed ($30/50 = 60\%$), the 80% rule was violated because the assessment used to consider employment weeded out more than 80% of the minority applicants whom applied. If 40% of the African American applicants passed the assessment ($40/50 = 80\%$) the use of the assessment tool would have been supported as it did not cause a disparate impact on minority applicants.

Commonly, disparate impact is confused with disparate treatment. In this study, disparate treatment refers to the intentional act of discrimination toward a person or group on the basis of race, religion, nationality, or ethnicity by an agency or group. The acts of disparate treatment can be either overt and direct, or hidden and implied (NC State University, 2010). Disparate treatment can refer to derogatory comments, explicitly biased policies and procedures, abrasive behaviors towards employees of the protective class, etc. (NC State University, 2010). An employee can attest that disparate treatment has occurred if s/he is able to show “that an employer acted with discriminatory intent by establishing that there were no legitimate nondiscriminatory reasons for an employer’s decision or by creating an inference of discriminatory intent through the use of class-wide statistics” (Willborn, 1985, p. 800). Socially, Willborn (1985) provided examples of disparate impact. For instance, in light of employee salary, Willborn explained that if an employer based current pay on past salary, disparate impact is created due to the nature that women are typically paid less than men. Additionally, Willborn (1985) explained that if an employer withheld employment from people with an arrest record, then disparate impact is created “in a society in which African Americans are arrested more frequently than Whites” (p. 801). With these two examples it may be confusing on how to

determine if an action is indeed disparate impact as several employment decisions may have a negative impact on a classified group of people. “Business Necessity” is a key factor in this determination. A “Business Necessity” is whether or not an employment criterion is required to perform the job (Willborn, 1985).

Willborn (1985) described four aspects that should be present to distinguish between disparate impact with and without a business necessity. The four aspects were: intent, past discrimination, functional equivalence, and statistical discrimination. Discriminatory intent was said to be present if one can prove the presence of adverse impact. Past discrimination related to societal mistreatment of a group such as women, African Americans, etc. Functional equivalence is explained as “neutral criteria that have an adverse impact on African American persons and cannot be justified by any business necessity are the functional equivalents of race and, therefore, should be treated like race” (p. 804) and “should include proof of absence of individual control” (p. 812). Finally, statistical discrimination is related to disparate impact in terms of economic theory such as employer decisions that are not based on productivity or assumptions of individuals from certain demographic groups based off stereotypical information that represent “market imperfection” (Willborn, 1985). To prove actions of discrimination, U.S. Supreme Court case, *McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green* (1973) outlined the way in which such litigation cases must be pursued.

In this case, mechanic Percy Green was dismissed from his job due to his involvement in the Civil Rights movement in St. Louis in which he used his car to block the road leading to the McDonnell Douglas business office located downtown. Green sued the company and the case was appealed. This case was responsible for creating an order of operation to discrimination cases. First, the employee of the discrimination case has to establish a “*prima facie*” (clear) case

of discrimination as a member of the Title VII protected class. Second, the employer must show evidence to prove that the action was legitimate and non-discriminatory. Finally, the employee must prove that the employer's explanation of his/her action(s) was an excuse for discrimination (NC State University, 2010). In this study, disparate impact (not disparate treatment) is used as a theoretical framework to investigate the disproportionality of African American students in North Carolina's gifted programs.

In previous sections, disproportionality has been identified as an imbalance between the enrollments of African American students represented in gifted education programs compared to the enrollment of African American students represented school/district wide. The next segment provides the origin of disparate impact, its connection to the disproportionality of African American students in gifted education, and the way in which disparate impact will be used in the research study. First an exploration of the theory's history and origin is demonstrated. Later, Chapter II will connect findings from the research conducted on disparate impact and the topic of disproportionality of African American students in gifted programs. While the origin of disparate impact stems from several legal cases in the United States, only a few of the most popular and impactful cases will be reviewed, starting with Title VII.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made a clear distinction between disparate treatment and disparate impact. The act allowed individuals or groups to sue employers for discriminatory action against employees or employment candidates that led to the initial employment or promotion of an individual or group on the bases of race, color, gender, nationality, or religion (Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII). Though age was not included in Title VII, age discrimination was addressed by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. The goal of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, was to promote neutral and nonbiased

employment policies that discouraged discrimination of many sorts. The act allowed plaintiffs to sue on the grounds for prejudice, both intentional and unintentional, that excluded members of Title VII's protected class. While the onus was placed on the employee or candidate to prove that the employment practice or policy was intentionally or unintentionally biased, the employer had to justify how and why the practice was necessary for business. To illustrate this act, the noteworthy case of *Griggs v. Duke Power Company* (1971) is reviewed.

In *Griggs v. Duke Power Company* an investigation of disparate impact was conducted to confirm or deny the presence of hidden racial discrimination in the company's promotion policies. At the time, Duke Power only employed African American workers in the labor department at the Dan River plant located in Draper, North Carolina. These positions earned the lowest pay in the company (*Griggs v. Duke Power Company, 1971*; NC State University, 2010). After the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, Duke Power changed its policy to require all candidates seeking positions outside of the labor department to obtain a high school diploma and achieve a minimum score on an IQ test to be considered. Due to this policy, African American workers who did not meet these requirements were largely excluded from promotional opportunities in comparison to their White counterparts (*Griggs v. Duke Power Company, 1971*; NC State University, 2010). Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibits tests performance as a factor of hire or promotion unless the test given is a "reasonable measure of job performance" (NC State University, Equal Employment Opportunity Training, 2010, p. 29).

In this Supreme Court case, it was stated that Title VII "proscribes not only overt discrimination but also practices that are fair in form, but discriminatory in operation." Additionally, the case noted, "absence of discriminatory intent does not redeem employment procedures or testing mechanisms that operate as 'built in headwinds' for minority groups and

are unrelated to measuring job capacity.” Therefore, Duke Power’s transfer procedure was found to be in violation of the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. In the NC State University Equal Employment Opportunity training, this scenario was explained as such:

Disparate impact occurs when an employer practice, as shown by statistics, has a greater impact on one group than on another. Examples of such practices may include written tests, height and weight requirements, educational requirements, and subjective procedures, such as interviews. In this scenario, the company's requirement that employees seeking promotion had to take an aptitude test was universally applied.

However, the requirement eliminated more minorities than it did Whites. Therefore, there was a disparate impact based on race, even though there was no intentional discrimination on the part of the employer. (NC State University, Equal Employment Opportunity Training, 2010, p. 23).

Similar to *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.* another noteworthy case of disparate impact was *Wards Cove Packing v. Antonio* (1989). In this case, the salmon canning company, Wards Cove Packing employed White workers to fill higher salaried, non-cannery positions at a significantly higher rate than non-White workers. In fact, the company offices in Washington state and Oregon were significantly staffed with lower paid minorities, all holding cannery positions (*Wards Cove Packing v. Antonio*, 1989; NC State University, 2010). Initially, the Court of appeals found the statistical disparity as ample evidence to establish a clear case of disparate impact. However, the Supreme Court reversed this decision. After much criticism from Civil Rights leaders, the decision was overturned by Congress in the Civil Rights Act of 1991 (*Wards Cove Packing v. Antonio*, 1989; NC State University, 2010). In looking at the research, a discussion on disparate impact in gifted education warranted a pre-conversation in

disproportionality. The dialogue between the two factors, is seen by this researcher as relative work to the concept of culturally responsive teaching. It is assumed by this researcher that culturally responsive teaching may be a possible factor that impacts the disproportionality (thus, disparate impact) of African American students identified in gifted identification overall. The following section will explore this logic.

In the research, culturally responsive teaching is used to understand ways in which culturally aware and responsive educators successfully identify students of color for gifted education placement, and inversely, those that do not. In order to do this, the lens of disparate impact is used to examine potentially biased practices of educators that result in the exclusion of African American students in gifted education. The remainder of Chapter II turns to the literature to bridge the gaps between theory and practice. The following sections review the five common influences that literature described as contributing factors to the disproportionality of African American students in gifted education (See Figure 1).

Existing Research

A review of existing research has yielded common trends found in the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education programs. The literature revealed 1) Ability tracking 2) teacher perceptions of African American learners 3) the under-preparation of African American students 4) parental involvement and 5) test bias, as relative factors to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted programs (Henfield, Owens, & Moore, 2008; Grantham & Henfield, 2011; Jackson, 2012). While each of these five factors are important, the following section will discuss the first four factors in greater detail, while briefly reviewing test bias. In comparison to the other four contributing factors impacting the under-enrollment of African American students in gifted education, test bias has been frequently acknowledged in studies assessing identification procedures (Ford et al., 2002; Ford,

2010, Jackson, 2012). However, the remaining factors: ability tracking, teacher perceptions, under-preparation, and [African American] parental involvement, yield less empirical evidence than test bias during the literature review for this research study. In fact, Ford, Harris, Tyson, and Trotman (2002) mention that a previous independent study by Ford (1998) revealed that at the time of her literature review, she found 2,816 articles concerning gifted education. Only 36 of them focused on African American students with the majority of these workers looking at gifted identification and assessments. For this reason, test bias will be briefly mentioned but reviewed at length. Also, limited studies on gifted education at the secondary level is provided to illustrate the comprehensive and longitudinal impact of disproportionality on gifted African American students beyond elementary school. The first contributing factor reviewed is ability tracking.

Ability Tracking

In this dissertation, ability tracking refers to student grouping and course placement as a result of academic ability and past achievement on course material and state assessments. Ability tracking has been described as a common system to re-segregate White and minority students within a public school setting (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, gifted students in the state of North Carolina are identified and tracked in gifted programs from 3rd grade throughout the remainder of their educational career until matriculation in 12th grade. For students whom do not qualify for gifted services, a regular education track or remedial track is selected and remains in effect for non-gifted students until matriculation in 12th grade as well. Respectfully, this section will discuss studies that researched ability tracking at the elementary and secondary education levels. While the focus of the research study is on elementary education for gifted learners, some research in this section will discuss the impact of

ability tracking at the secondary level as well. As noted previously, a brief review of secondary education findings is important as it displays the long-term effects of ability tracking.

“There have been claims that gifted education re-segregates the public schools,” stated Dr. James H. Borland, a professor in the Teachers’ College of New York’s Columbia University (Baker, 2013, p. 6). In a New York Times interview with researcher/journalist, Al Baker, Borland continued to explain student tracking by stating, “Certainly there was concern with keeping middle-class families involved in public schools, and to the extent that we use tests to select kids for gifted programs, that tends to skew the programs toward children from wealthier, White families” (Baker, 2013, p. 6). In 2013, Al Baker investigated the gifted and talented program in Alfred E. Smith’s Public School 163 in New York City. That school year, 652 kindergarten through fifth grade students were enrolled in P.S. 163. Of these students, 63 percent were African American and Hispanic; while 27 percent were White and 6 percent were Asian. However, of the 652 students enrolled, 205 were identified as gifted learners. The nine gifted classrooms consisted of 47 percent White students, 15 percent Asian students, and 32 percent African American and Hispanic students. In the general education courses, only 18 percent of students were White. Surprisingly, the racial disparities seen were more apparent in the kindergarten through second grade classes. From kindergarten through second grade, seven Hispanic students and four African American students were identified as gifted learners.

In this case study, Baker evaluated student tracking by observing gifted enrollment procedures, differences in gifted verses general curriculum, and differences made in the learning environment. The first difference noted was the location of gifted classrooms in comparison to the location of general education classrooms. Gifted classrooms were located in designated areas and hallways of the school that are kept separate from the general education classrooms by

brightly colored metal doors. Depending on a student's identification, gifted and regular education students take different pathways to get to their classrooms. The gifted hallways were kept quiet throughout the day; while, many reading lessons were given to general education students in the hallways as students sat on bare floors (Baker, 2013). The second observed difference was the seating arrangements between the two groups during lunch time. Each day at 11:25 a.m., students lined the halls for lunch. Routinely, the gifted students were released first to enter into the lunch room, creating a visual "string of mostly White faces and then a line of mostly African American and Hispanic ones [walking] down the hall" (Baker, 2013, p. 2). Inside the cafeteria, seating was organized by classroom, keeping the gifted and general education students apart. Al Baker was successful in getting additional insight regarding differences between the groups during parent-teacher interviews.

Baker learned that in order to qualify for admissions into any New York City's gifted public school program, students must score within the 90th percentile on a standardized test. Once this goal is met, the parents of each student is allowed to request which gifted program housed in any of the public schools that they would like for their child to attend. With this in consideration, central office assigned each identified gifted student to one of their gifted education school choices based on seat allotment (Baker, 2013). Students who did not meet identification criteria are automatically assigned to their neighborhood school unless they requested admission into a dual-language program. Teachers at P.S. 163 reported that students in the gifted programs received an "enriched" educational curriculum that further separated them by ability within the gifted and talented education classroom. Curriculum wise, gifted students were required to draw conclusions between main ideas, conduct presentations, and explain relationships between concepts in math, reading, and writing. However, general education

students spent more time on “fundamental skills” and received more of a “bare bones” educational experience. Some of the general education courses were even titled “integrated co-teaching classes” which mixed special or remedial education students in with the general education classrooms. Yet, this “integrated” practice did not exist between mixing general or remedial students in with the gifted classrooms. Teachers admitted that gifted students performed at or above grade level while general education students actually performed at or below grade level. One teacher stated, “There’s no way I’d put my kid in a general-education class here, no way, because it’s right next to the project and all the kids in general education come from the projects” (Baker, 2013, p. 10).

Teachers also reported a noticeable difference between the relationships built between teachers and parents of gifted students versus parents of general education students. Parents also discussed their experiences with the racial disparities. Some White parents acknowledged the lack of racial representation in the gifted classrooms but stated that they did not believe this was an “intentional action”. One anonymous White parent acknowledged the disparity but exclaimed, “It’s not our fault. We want the best for our children,” (Baker, 2013, p. 10). Since 1998, one African American parent sent all three of her children to the gifted program at P.S. 163. She commented on how her children were the few and at times, the only African American students in gifted education classes. She stated, “They don’t advertise it the way it should be advertised, but I’m glad I was savvy enough to navigate the system and give my children what they need” (Baker, 2013, p. 11). During this case study, Baker also investigated NYC’s public school system and gifted programs district-wide. He found that from 2006-2012, 70 percent of city’s students were African American or Hispanic. However, combined, African Americans and Hispanics represented roughly 15 percent of the city’s gifted learner population (Baker, 2013).

Like Baker's research, there was study which took place in 2009 with similar findings in the state of North Carolina. In 2009, Assistant Professor Romanoff examined the effects of gifted track placement on elementary aged students. Romanoff compared the math and reading achievement levels of African American and White elementary students identified as gifted to African American and White elementary peers who were screened for services but not identified. This 4-year longitudinal study compared scores on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Reading Comprehension Test and the North Carolina End-of-Grade Math test for 3rd through 5th grade students. Results indicated that identified (gifted) African American and White students significantly outperformed unidentified African American and White students on standardized tests. However, White students outperformed African American students in the identified group as well as the referred but unidentified group. Yet, African American identified students outperformed White and African American referred but unidentified students. Romanoff (2009) suggested that due to testing outcomes, the only way to increase minority presence in gifted tracks is to rely on student portfolios including class work performance, parent letters, classroom observations, and open-ended, hands-on problem solving assessments in the screening process instead of the sole use of cultural and gender biased assessments. Similar to this study, another researcher evaluated the outcomes of capable African American students in New York. Burris (2010) focused on the de-tracked learning environments of minority students in elementary and secondary settings.

Burris (2010) examined how the New York's Rockville Centre School District systematically de-tracked kindergarten through tenth grade levels by eliminating all low-tracked programs district-wide. As a result, the statistics for minority student enrollment in gifted courses was parallel to that of White students. Burris (2010) noted 95% of African American and Latino

students earned a Regents diploma and 87% took at least one IB (International Baccalaureate) course. Burris suggested that this format took place in public school systems around the nation so that similar results would appear while lowering the disproportionality of minority students enrolled in gifted educational tracks. The study challenged building level principals to execute the following actions to support struggling students in order to successfully de-track their school (Burris, 2010, p. 33):

- examine the effects of tracking
- evaluate student transcripts for track placement data
- assess tracks for homogenous achievement
- reconsider teacher assignments
- reallocate resources

When discussing ability tracking, research has indicated that African Americans are not enrolled in gifted education in proportionate rates (Mickelson & Heath, 1999; Solórzano & Ornelas, 2006; Kelly, 2009). Less than forty years ago the U.S. Office of Education Statistics reported that 60-80% of students in mild mental retardation (MMR) classes were African American, American Indian, Mexican, and Puerto Rican (Artiles, Harry, Reschly, & Chinn, 2002). The following research reported that African American students are systemically tracked in remedial education at substantially higher rates in comparison to White or other ethnic groups. This data is important to review as it demonstrates the full spectrum of ability tracking and its adverse effects on African American learners. Wanda J. Blanchett explored this issue in 2006.

Wanda J. Blanchett used the lens of White privilege and racism to understand the disproportionality of African American students tracked in remedial or “special” education (2006). She expressed that the overrepresentation of African American students in special

education is a result of inadequate teaching, curriculum, resource allocation and pedagogy from educators (Blanchett, 2006). Her study found that African American students made up 14.8% of American students' ages 6 to 21; yet, accounted for 20% of the special education population. African American students were identified as mentally retarded nearly two and half times greater than White students (Blanchett, 2006). Additionally, African American students were also diagnosed with emotional/behavioral disorders over one and half times greater than their White peers (Blanchett, 2006).

Instructionally, African American students were diagnosed 1.13 times the rate of White students with learning disabilities. Blanchett acknowledged the education of African American students as an isolated, "watered-down" curriculum. She proceeded to explain that White people (including educators) were taught to not acknowledge White privilege and thusly, maintain low educational tracks for African American learners (Blanchett, 2006). Her work indicated that African American students received pull-out services compared to inclusionary services offered to White special education students at a strikingly higher rate. For clarity, inclusionary services allowed special education students to remain in the regular education classroom while receiving differentiated instruction from the teacher. This system represented the same system found seven years later in Al Baker's research at P.S. 163, shared at the beginning of this section. On the contrary, pull-out services remove the special education student from the regular classroom setting to receive remedial education in an exclusive isolated learning environment. Thus, pull-out services remove exposure to rigorous curriculum in a differentiated learning environment. Similar research conducted by O'Connor and Fernandez (2006) identified contributing factors leading to the referral of minority students to remedial education.

O'Connor and Fernandez (2006) argued that minority students reared in impoverished homes were exposed to risk factors that lead to placement in special education. The Theory of Compromised Human Development (TCHD) was used to explain this notion. O'Connor and Fernandez explained that the development of low-income minority students is compared to the model development of White middle-class students as a measure of normalcy. When African American and Latino students failed to succeed in a White environment, they were deemed "deficient" which is translated to a mental, emotional, behavioral or intellectually disability diagnosis. Minority students were then identified as Learning Disabled (LD), Mildly Mentally Retarded (MMR), and Emotionally Disabled (ED); all "judgmental categories" in special education assessments diagnosed by building level educators, not mental health professionals (O'Connor & Fernandez, 2006). O'Connor and Fernandez (2006) deemed the special identification system as culturally biased and reflective of White middle-class values. In the same year, other researchers examined special education for minority students. Also in 2006, Klinger and Harry explored language barriers as an element of referral to special education.

Klinger and Harry (2006) investigated the influence language barriers for English language learners (ELL) had on the services that child study teams (CST) offer minority students. The research sought to discover if child study teams offered intervention services for English language learners or quickly referred them to special education. In the same study, Klinger and Harry revealed that many students were referred to special education testing due to poor academic performance and/or behavioral issues. The goal of the study was to "differentiate between English language acquisition and learning disabilities" (Klinger & Harry, 2006, p. 2248). The study used ethnography techniques on African American, European American, Hispanic (predominantly from Cuba, Nicaragua, and Mexico), Haitian American, and Jamaican

American students. It is important to keep in mind that this research study identified Black and/or African American as a person who culturally and ethnically derives from African ancestry which would include the African, Haitian, and Jamaican Americans. Klinger and Harry observed CST meetings for content, referral, and placement data. There were 272 open-ended/semi-structured interviews and 84 informal interviews with school and district based personnel, students, and parents.

Results suggested that child CST relied on habitual practices in the referral process that led to minority students being overly identified as special education learners (Klinger & Harry, 2006). These habitual practices included: [CST] not knowing when a child was ready to be assessed in English, confusion about when to refer an ELL, misinterpreting a child's lack of full proficiency as low IQ or learning disabilities, and an overreliance on test scores with minimal investigation of factors that may have influenced performance (Klinger & Harry, 2006). Additionally, CST failed to initiate alternative strategies for ELL students. Instead, students were referred directly to special education services. Educators were encouraged to reflect on CST practices and identify "habits" that tracked minority students into special education due to language. Also, members of student services were cautioned to explore alternative strategies prior to special education referral.

Collectively, researchers on gifted and remedial education have identified ways in which African American students are low tracked and denied access to gifted services and in many cases, placed in special/remedial learning environments instead. The studies reviewed in this section served as a comprehensive guide to viewing the possible causes and long-term effects on African American student learners. Unfortunately, these African American students were placed in low tracked curriculums which denied them access to gifted education due to improper

assessment tools and faulty perception of minority achievement in learning. Although the research study does not focus on special/remedial education, brief mentioning of this topic was provided to show the negative impact of ability tracking on African American learners. This is an important aspect of the entire argument of gifted access and disproportionality of African American students in accelerated curriculum. Research such as this provides a full view of the topic at hand and expresses the contextual message explained by researchers such as Gloria Ladson-Billings when describing public school re-segregation and opportunity learning for African American students. While reviewing the topic of ability tracking, relationships between teacher perspectives and ability tracking appeared. The following section surveyed the literature conducted on teacher perspectives and its effect on the disproportionality of African American student learners identified for gifted placement and advanced curriculum and instruction. Again, the research is concentrated in the arena of elementary instruction with particular interest on African American student learners. However, during the examination of the literature, limited articles with this narrow scope of teacher perspectives on elementary African American students only, was rare and did not yield many research findings. Therefore, this section had to include the effects of teacher perspectives of minorities as a whole and not just African American student learners. Also, this section had to include teacher perspective data at the secondary level as well in order to provide enough information on the topic.

Teacher Perceptions of African American (and minority) Learners

Literature has identified educators' perspectives on African American students as a contributing factor to the underrepresentation of African American learners in accelerated courses and gifted programs (Ferguson, 2003). Ethnicity has been found as a key component that sways teacher-student referral to gifted education (Elhoweris, Mutua, Alsheikh & Holloway,

2005). In 2005, Ladson-Billings' research revealed that White teachers made up nearly 90% of all United States teachers. It was suggested that African American students' ability to compete and progress in advanced learning programs successfully were influenced by their thoughts of how they are perceived by teachers and other educators. Consequently, culturally proficient practices were looked to, to alter negative perceptions White teachers might have of minority students (Lindsey et al., 2009).

In an early study, Ford, Harris, Tyson, and Trotman (2002) aimed to evaluate the common question of, "How can we recruit and retain more African American students in our gifted programs?" The researchers turned to teacher perceptions in an attempt to research the topic. They used the term "deficit perspective" to describe the work. The term was explained as:

A deficit perspective exists whereby students of color who are culturally different from their White counterparts are viewed as culturally deprived or disadvantaged. This deficit perspective regarding cultural diversity keeps educators from recognizing the gifts and talents of African American students. (Ford et al., 2002, p. 52)

Ford et al. (2002) looked at recruitment and retention barriers for African American learners in gifted education programs. Low referral rates of African American students were found to be a major contributing factor to low recruitment. They found that much of the referral process was influenced by students' performance on standardized tests (ahead, test bias will be discussed in greater detail) and teachers' interpretation of test results. Also, teachers often interpreted the abilities and behaviors of African American students from a deficit perspective (Ford et al., 2002). For example, teachers would likely view African American students' energy and movement as hyperactivity, immaturity, irrationality, and low cognitive ability. Additionally, the communalism that is heavily shared in the African American community is often seen by

mainstream educators as social dependency and immaturity (Ford et al., 2002). These ideas of African American learners (and other minorities as well) influenced policies and practices designed to respond to differences in the educational setting (Ford et al., 2002). Furthermore, these ideas shaped the perspectives of teachers, counselors and other educators involved in gifted student referral.

Ford, Harris, Tyson, and Trotman discussed early research describing deficit ideologies. In conclusion of the earlier work, it was said that "piori" assumptions of minorities, particularly African Americans led to "conscious fraud-dishonest and prejudicial research methods, deliberate miscalculations, convenient omissions, and data misinterpretations among scientist studying intelligence," (Ford et al., 2002, p. 53). In education, these practices led to the reliance on biased standardized tests as a means to legitimately segregate minorities from White learners (Ford et al., 2002). Therefore, the use of White cultural norms was used as a programmatic measure of intelligence that expectedly yields low scores for African American students, thus limiting their educational access and opportunity. Ford emphasized the lack of multicultural perceptions among teachers as the culprit in the disenfranchisement of African American students. She suggested that teachers become familiar with the ways in which African American students think and learn (Ford et al., 2002). Ford expressed that African American students were concrete learners who valued constructive responses to their work. She further explained how teachers should recognize independent learning styles of African American students and whether or not they were "global or analytical thinkers, visual or auditory learners, mobile or static, peer-oriented or non-peer oriented" (Ford et al., 2002, p. 55). In doing this, Ford suggested that these characteristics influenced the learning styles and environment for African American students as

it tapped into triggers for motivation, understanding, and ultimate achievement. As a result, Ford et al. (2002) encouraged the proper multicultural training of teachers.

In the same study, Ford et al. (2002) depicted reports of several educators regarding their educational experiences with multicultural and gifted training. In 1999, Ford surveyed minority teachers about their decision to teach regular, remedial, or gifted education. Many reported being undertrained in the areas of underachievement among gifted students. Teachers were also undertrained in the areas of gifted assessments or formal preparation in gifted curriculum and instruction. Considering the previous research, Ford et al. (2002) recommend that educators engaged in self-examination and reflection, familiarized themselves with accurate information regarding diverse groups, learned how to merge multicultural perspectives into the curriculum and instruction, and finally forge partnerships with member and families of diverse communities. Teacher perspectives could then be shaped and reflect positive observations and interactions with African American (and minority) students as gifted learners. Similar to Ford, Harris, Tyson, and Trotman (2002), Siegle and Powell created a research study that also explored teacher bias when nominating students for gifted education programs two years later.

In 2004, Siegle and Powell created and disseminated twelve student profiles to teachers in an effort to measure teacher bias. The goal of the research was to identify student characteristics that tend to influence the teacher recommendation process when nominating students for gifted programs. The two researchers aimed to explore teacher bias through the evaluation of participants' beliefs, stereotypes, prejudice, and expectations. Participants were asked to evaluate each of the twelve student portfolios and indicate how strongly they believed each profile should or should not be nominated for initiation into the district's gifted education program. The study included several citations to earlier research in the 1990's to support the

belief that “classroom teachers are not reliable in identifying gifted and talented students,” (Siegle & Powell, 2004, p. 22). With this in mind, Siegle and Powell reported gender bias, attention to weakness over strengths, and selection criteria as areas in which teacher bias seemed to influence the nomination process. These areas led to Siegle and Powell’s research questions:

1. Do teachers use similar criteria when nomination males and females?
2. What role does student interest play?
3. How important are classroom behaviors such as completing homework?

The created student profiles consisted of information regarding mental computation skills, Reading level, and math proficiency. The profiles did not include information regarding test scores, work habits, interest, socioeconomic status, or racial identifiers. The researchers chose to use “Anglo” names to avoid ethnicity as a selection criterion. However, gender assigned names were given to each profile to indicate whether the student was male or female. There were six male profiles and six female profiles given to the ninety-two study participants; made up of fifty-eight classroom teachers and thirty-four gifted and talented specialists. 83 percent of the participants were female. Prior to receiving student portfolios, all participants attended a full four day conference and were then asked to use a Likert scale to make a gifted and talented recommendation for each student. The study found that students with a “large storehouse of information” (p. 23), and who were able to do mental computations were more likely to be nominated for gifted services than students who completed schoolwork. Also, teachers often focused on student weakness as a factor to deny gifted recommendations than gifted and talented specialists. In fact, none of the teachers rated any of the twelve student profiles higher than a gifted and talented specialist. Ultimately, the research suggested that teachers tended to focus on student weakness and why students should not be nominated for gifted services. These findings

are similar to the deficit ideology model revealed in the previously mentioned work of Ford, Harris, Tyson, and Trotman (2002). Therefore, it is the understanding of the researcher that in the event teachers' nominations are not entirely or impart reliant on cultural characteristics, the practice of deficit thinking still lead the educator to focus on traditional evidence of student achievement. As displayed in the research, traditional evidence of student achievement tends to not be culturally sensitive to the way in which African American and minority students learn, interpret, or display knowledge. In this instance, there is a disparate impact on African American and minority students in the teacher nomination process. In a more recent study, Szymanski and Shaff (2013) took the topic of teacher perspective and investigated its connection to gifted diverse students.

Szymanski and Shaff (2013) conducted a qualitative study that evaluated teachers' perceptions of their educational and professional training to teach in a multicultural setting and working with gifted Hispanic students. The Szymanski and Shaff (2013) study was conducted in one school district at a rural mid-west town in the United States. The district included 30.5 percent White students, 1.2 percent African American students, 1.9 percent Asian students, and 64.5 percent Hispanic students. Of this population, 65 percent of students from the selected school district were eligible for free and reduced lunch. The school selected for research participation was comprised of students in which English was not their first language and whose parents did not speak English well. The school was placed on an academic watch list in 2007. Similar to North Carolina, the school district screened third grade students for gifted services. Therefore, Szymanski and Shaff (2013) included a total of six, all White second and third grade teachers in the qualitative study. All participants engaged in semi-structured interviews and

observations. The interview questions were designed to provide insight into the following Szymanski & Shaff's research questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of their training in working with Hispanic gifted learners?
2. How do teachers identify students to participate in a gifted and talented program?
3. How do teachers modify classroom instruction to meet the needs of gifted and talented students?
4. What barriers do teacher perceive to have an effect on Hispanic gifted students' participation in a gifted and talented program?

Results indicated three themes: teachers experience differences in training regarding diverse low-income gifted students, "teachers use personal beliefs to compensate for the lack of training in identifying and accommodating gifted learners" (Szymanski & Shaff, 2013, p. 11), and "teachers perceive barriers for diverse students participating in gifted programming" (Szymanski & Shaff, 2013, p. 12). Findings illustrated that all six teachers reported minimal training in identifying the needs of gifted students. In fact, teachers reported a once-a-year training and handouts as the method of continuous education from the district's talented and gifted coordinator. However, none of the six participants identified the lack of training as an influential factor to their ability to identify students for gifted services. Additionally, the teachers identified language, poverty, and the lack of familial resources to expose students to out-of-school activities were identified as "barriers" that hinder diverse students from participating in gifted and talented programs. Most teachers reported that they did not see race and culture as differences that needed to be acknowledged. One participant stated that it's not race but the family structure, "especially in the Hispanics. Girls' roles aren't to be intelligent" (Szymanski &

Shaff, 2013, p. 15). After collecting interview data, the researchers were able to draw conclusions of their own from the qualitative study.

In the same study, Szymanski and Shaff (2013) found that in place of using methods obtained through proper training, many teachers used personal beliefs and experiences as benchmarks to measure student achievement and aptitude. Consequently, this practice was seen as an influential factor in how teachers identified learning challenges among students and ways in which teachers were able to differentiate instruction to respond to students' perceived needs. It was said that if teachers relied on personal opinions as opposed to training, there might have been an impact in the educational opportunities presented to students from racially and culturally diverse groups; especially in terms of giftedness. Additionally, Szymanski and Shaff (2013) expressed concern regarding teachers' reports of seeing all students as the same in the areas of culture and academics. For example, some teachers reported that they did not provide differentiated instruction and required all students to complete the same work. The researchers acknowledged how this action denied the history and experiences of minority students, limited teachers' ability to recognize individual student needs, and affected the teachers' ability to know which students successfully mastered material. Szymanski and Shaff (2013) went on to say that due to language or cultural differences of minority students, untrained educators may not have recognized actual characteristics that students possessed that were associated with giftedness. The researchers reflected on their findings by stating, "Failure to respond to the need for challenge or differentiated instruction may send unintended messages of stereotypes to academically advanced, diverse students who are already aware that society at large sees them as less capable than their White peers" (Szymanski & Shaff, 2013, p. 20). To end, Szymanski and Shaff (2013) recommended that teachers received proper training on giftedness, cultural

diversity, and the connection between the two. The study illustrated how teacher perceptions were in fact a contributing factor to the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education. Inspired by Szymanski and Shaff (2013), teachers' perception of student ability was thought to be largely connected to:

1. How teachers recognize student differences?
2. If and how student differences will be responded to through the delivery of differentiated instruction?
3. Which educational opportunities will be made available to diverse students?
4. What characteristics must minority students display in order to be associated with gifted learners?
5. If and how students of diverse races and cultures will be evaluated and nominated for gifted educational services?

Although the focus of Szymanski and Shaff's (2013) study was on the Hispanic population, it supported the assumption that findings could be generalized to other minority populations, including African American students displaying language and linguistic difficulty. The findings and suggestions of this study also aligned with aforementioned research studies that focused on African American students. Ultimately, the inquiries raised in Szymanski and Shaff (2013) led to the grand question of "How are diverse students prepared for future participation in gifted education programs?" The following section probed into this concept by evaluating student preparation for African American learners. Yet, for the same reasons given previously, research data includes both elementary and secondary research.

The Under-Preparation of African American Students

There are several factors that impact the preparation of African American students for accelerated education. As explored, student tracking and teacher perceptions of African American students are among the factors identified. A combination of these contributing factors were noted in present research concerning the effects of racial isolation of African American learners. Jackson (2012) found that many African American students identified as gifted, self-selected to register in low tracked courses as a way to avoid being the “only” minority student in gifted classes. The investigation of this topic has led many researchers to scrutinize the area of student preparation for African American learners and why so few African Americans are identified and placed in gifted education. The level of preparation prior to identification plays an important role in the educators’ choice to recruit, select, or deny gifted services to African American students (Bonner, 2009). Earlier research stated that African American students need assistance in critical thinking skills, how to dissect readings, and communicate findings in written and oral forms (Oberjuerg, 1999). Therefore, the adaptation of state instructional standards are believed to better prepare minority students for participation in secondary gifted education programs such as Advance Placement courses (Oberjuerg, 1999). The following studies examined the level of preparation some African American students received in regular public education courses. These findings were further investigated to assess the influence prior preparation has on African American enrollment in gifted programs. Trailblazers, Ford and Thomas (1997), reviewed the preparation of gifted African American students and connections to underachievement and gifted identification.

Student performance is a common criteria used to determine student eligibility for gifted services. The researchers explored the role underachievement and prior preparation plays in the gifted identification process. The term “underachievement” was explained as “a discrepancy

between ability and performance” (Ford & Thomas, 1997, p. 1). Ford and Thomas suggested that teachers must question the following: “1) Is underachievement chronic, situational, or temporary? 2) Is underachievement subject specific or general? 3) What factors are contributing to underachievement (e.g. poor intrinsic motivation, poor academic self-esteem, negative peer pressures, and lack of family involvement, poor student-teacher relationships, [and] low teacher expectations)?” (Ford & Thomas, 1997, p. 2). Ford and Thomas drew from a previous study concerning gifted African American students and underachieving African American students. When asked about their educational experience and preparation, students in this study reported: too little time to understand material, being unmotivated and disinterested in school, having a less supportive classroom climate, and having less positive relationships between teachers and students (Ford & Thomas, 1997). In addition, the underachieving students reported that their lack of interest in school was fueled by the lack of attention to multicultural education in their classes.

Ford and Thomas (1997) found that when teachers were asked about student underachievement, if they lacked multicultural training, they communicated lower expectations for low income minority students. Consequently, it was reasonable to assume that the quality of educational instruction delivered to low income minorities may be compromised. Ford and Thomas (1997) explained that this cycle denied students access to appropriate education. Therefore, students failed to meet their potential and underachieved as a result of low interest, frustration, and lack of being academically challenged (Ford & Thomas, 1997). Ford and Thomas mentioned research that supported differences in learning styles for African American students and common teaching strategies of minority educators. It was explained that African American students learn best through visual and concrete methods. However, schools primarily taught in “verbal, abstract, and decontextualized ways” (Ford & Thomas, 1997). The research

concluded that the discrepancy between learning styles of African American students and common teaching styles taught in schools, led to the underachievement of African American learners; and thus continued the disproportionality in gifted African American enrollment. As mentioned in Ford and Thomas (1997), it was imperative to define underachievement in measurable quantitative and qualitative terms in order to have valid and reliable assessments that accurately assessed student performance and could offer suggestions for differentiated instruction. With Ford and Thomas as a model, additional research was conducted on the topic.

In 2006, Gilman Whiting expressed the challenges African American males faced in gifted education. His research used the Scholar Identity Model (SIM) to explore African American males' performance and preparation in accelerated curriculum in elementary and secondary education. Although the data included elementary aged African American males, Whiting expressed the true impact of the systemic mistreatment of African American male students was significantly seen at the middle and high school levels. As a result, Whiting's work suggested that African American males became less engaged in academics and thus, learned how to underachieve. Whiting provided theoretical and statistical datum that illustrated the impact of the under-preparedness of African American students on educators' decisions to deny access to gifted education. Whiting found that on a national level, African American males were the highest ranked population of students to be suspended, expelled, or drop out of school (Whiting, 2006). Additionally, these young men were found to score poorly on standardized tests, had the lowest GPAs, and had the highest referrals to special education (Whiting, 2006). Also, African American males held the smallest representation than any other race and gender demographic group in gifted education (Whiting, 2006). Collectively, Whiting suggested that these factors assisted in the lack of preparation and academic failure experienced by African American male

learners. Coupled with the absence of African American male scholars, Whiting (2006) explained that the diminishment seen in African American male student engagement later became complete academic withdrawal. Therefore, African American male students experienced an “underdeveloped sense of academic identity” which resulted in high risk academic failure as these students “devalued school and academics, and rejected school as a place to develop their sense of identity, self-worth, and self-efficacy” (Whiting, 2006, p. 222). Whiting described the Scholar Identity Model as the necessary action needed to challenge the under preparation of African American male students to adequately develop their scholar identities.

The Scholar Identity Model identified masculinity, racial identity; academic self-confidence, high need for achievement, low need for affiliation, self-awareness; self-control, willingness to make sacrifices, future orientation, and self-efficacy as characteristics needed for African American male success in academics (Whiting, 2006). African American males developed these attributes successfully when family, community, school, and mentorship were in place (Whiting, 2006). Whiting (2006) concluded that teacher perception influenced the way [African American male] students viewed themselves in terms of scholarship. Therefore, when scholar identity was achieved, African American males succeeded academically and educators saw them as gifted (Whiting, 2006). Whiting (2006) suggested that educators could better prepare students by challenging personal bias and supporting equitable learning. Within recent years, additional research was conducting on African American male student preparation in elementary (Winsler et. al., 2013).

Recently, Winsler, Gupta Karkhanis, Kim, and Levitt (2013) used the Miami School Readiness Project to follow 6,926 low-income African American males from preschool through 5th grade. Of the group, 453 African American male students were identified as gifted. However,

fifteen percent of these students did not receive any gifted education services. The focal point of the longitudinal study was to identify trajectories that led to the identification of elementary aged African American male students in gifted education programs. The research focused on child, family, and preschool preparation factors that increased the likelihood of gifted identification.

The study was situated in Miami-Dade County, Florida. The selected school district was the fourth largest district in the United States and was said to be ethnically and linguistically diverse (Winsler et al., 2013). African American students made up 26 percent of the district's school population and only 3.5 percent of the district's gifted and talented population. Meanwhile, White students in the gifted program made up 14 percent and Asian students made up 18 percent districtwide. The research sought to investigate when and to what extent African American males were identified for gifted services at the elementary level in Miami-Dade County schools. Winsler et al. (2013) questioned how many and what types of gifted education courses were offered to identified African American male students in a given school year. Finally, Winsler et al. (2013) wanted to know which child, family, and preschool factors predicted African American male placement in gifted programs. Students were administered a series of standardized test in preschool and kindergarten along with standardized math and reading assessments. In addition, students' end of the year grades were also collected and used to evaluate academic performance and school readiness.

Results indicated that of the 6,926 examined, 6.5 percent of African American male elementary students were identified as gifted. Of this group, 15 percent of these students did not receive full gifted education services including participation in separate classes for gifted students. Findings from the study suggested that African American male students whom attended preschool had an increased chance of being identified as gifted. Ultimately, students who were

well prepared with higher cognitive skills, language ability, motor skills and displayed behavioral and literacy readiness skills were more likely to be identified as well. Datum also indicated that students who spoke another language at home, received higher grades in school and on standardized tests, and who were older upon entering kindergarten, were additional predictors of gifted identification among young African American male students as well. Finally, the researchers noted that the comprehensive screening given to students by the research team yielded increased numbers of African American male students identified for gifted programs in comparison to the standardized test given by the school district. Winsler et al. (2013) concluded that if educators desired to increase the number of African American male students in gifted education programs, they should reconsider the assessment tools used and also assess and recruit students at the preschool level.

In summary, this section reviewed literature that examined the context of low performance and academic preparation of African American students in gifted education. Each article mentioned had a different research focus. However, all articles chosen, indicated findings that suggested the areas in which African American students are less prepared and therefore underachieve academically; limiting their access to gifted education. Thus far, ability tracking, teacher perceptions, and the under-preparation of African American students have much overlap. The National Education Association (2011) urged elementary educators to rid themselves of stereotypical attitudes toward African American boys, build a strong, knowledgeable, and empathetic relationship with students and families, recognize and adapt teaching methods to students' learning styles, understand and plan for language gaps, practice anti-bias strategies and actively counter the impact of racism on a student's sense of identity and competency. While there may be differences between the preparation of boys and girls, overall, improvements need

to be made at the school level to increase the proportionality of African American male and female learners. While Winsler et al. (2013) touched on familial impacts to the gifted identification process; the following section highlights the important role of African American parental involvement in gifted identification.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement has been identified as another contributing factor to the academic success of African American students (Henfield, Owen, & Moore, 2008). Early on, Denton and West (2002) found that kindergarteners' performance was higher when they were read to at home at least three times per week. The study showed that ninety-three percent of students who were read to at least three times per week were reared by mothers with at least a Bachelor's level degree. Denton and West concluded that the level of education achieved by parents increased parental perception on education as a whole.

Early research suggested that African American parents have developed lower expectations for work quality and put forth less effort into academic performance out of fear of being unjustly evaluated (Ogbu, 1978; Ferguson, 1998). In Ferguson's (1998) study, it was reported that African American parents tended to punish their students for earning grades below a C-. However, White parents tended to punish their students for earning grades below a B-. Additional studies have provided the context in which researchers have examined African American parental involvement and education for African American student learners. In 1997, Ford and Thomas dedicated a portion of their research study on African American student underachievement to the topic of African American parenting and its influence on students' ability to achieve. In this work, Ford and Thomas mentioned a study by Clark in 1983.

In this research it was said that achieving African American students were reared in households in which their parents were assertive in their involvement with their child's school. Also, achieving African American students had parents who stayed up-to-date on their child's academic progress. These parents were said to hold realistic expectations for their students while at the same time, remaining optimistic and setting clear achievement-oriented goals for their children. Additionally, these parents outlined specific boundaries and displayed supportive behaviors such as building nurturing, respectful, trusting, and talkative relationships with their children to meet expressed goals (Clark, 1983). On the contrary, low performing students were reared in homes in which their parents expressed negative feelings of helplessness and hopelessness towards their student's education. These parents also reported vague educational goals with unclear expectations for their children. Above all, parents of underachieving students reported that they themselves were less assertive in their children's educational careers and they felt less confident in their parental abilities and skills (Clark, 1983). Hence, some argue that there are African American students reared in communities that view education as inferior to basic needs (Henfield et al., 2008). Is this the case? Or are parents unaware of how to advocate for their child (ren) to receive advanced, rigorous opportunities in the classroom?

Schader (2009) wrote an article that discussed the benefits of parental nomination for gifted identification. This process allowed parents to gather information regarding gifted services and advocacy for gifted evaluation and/or testing for their child (Schader, 2009). Though, parental nomination is welcomed in some school districts, it is not welcomed by all school districts for various reasons. However, for LEA's that do allow parent nomination, it is said to be beneficial. Through this process, parents not only share developmental information, but are more prone to accurately describe behaviors that reflect their child's logical abilities in the areas of

creativity, motivation, social/emotional maturity, and intellectual curiosity (Schader, 2009, p. 3). Parents are able to identify signs of creative problem solving ability, early reading, extensive and expressive verbal skills, imagination, memory, and focus skills that are indicative of early signs of giftedness (Schader, 2009, p. 4).

Schader (2009) noted that teachers were still reminded to consider diverse students with low academic performance for advanced opportunities due to parent advocacy. Schader's work encouraged parents to receive adequate and formal training to educate them in gifted identification strategies to assist in recognizing early signs of giftedness. Schader also encouraged school districts to enable parent nomination into the gifted identification process. Though Schader acknowledged some areas of concern such as educators discounting parent information and parents who seek distinctive labels for their children, all in all, her work supported parental nomination. She stated:

Parents from disadvantaged situations are less likely to understand the necessity for advocacy when children need special academic services...Parents of at-risk students, particularly those from cultural backgrounds that discourage public discussion of a child's gifted or accomplishments, are informed and encouraged to advocate for appropriate school placement. (Schader, 2009, p. 5)

In order to consider the level in which parents are capable and comfortable advocating for the child(ren) to receive better educational opportunities, it is helpful to understand 1) their personal experiences with education and 2) how those experiences have shaped their involvement with their child(ren)'s academic careers. Insight into this context informs educators of the history behind parental involvement. Consequently, strategies can be identified to counter negative parent/school interactions and foster better relationships increasing parental advocacy.

Michael-Chadwell (2010) executed a study concerning perceptions and lived experiences of African American parents and regular education teachers during the gifted education nomination process. Parents and teachers in the study reported personal viewpoints on the nomination, assessment, and identification procedures contributing to the under identification of African American students in gifted programs. The study included eleven African American parents, four White teachers, four Hispanic teachers, and four African American teachers living near San Antonio, Texas. The study focused on two of ten interview questions (p. 105):

1. What factors do you believe contribute to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted and talented programs?
2. What recommendations can you offer educational leadership concerning the issues of this research study?

In response to the two questions, teachers reported culturally biased assessments or lack of parental awareness of giftedness and consumer rights as contributors to the under-identification of African American students. Less than half of teachers reported teacher bias as a contributing factor. Teachers also identified home factors, teachers' perceptions about students' behaviors, negative image of giftedness among minorities, lack of African American leadership in decision-making, and unawareness of the underrepresentation as contributors to the disparity. Teachers also felt that an increase in testing, professional development, time to identify students, the number of African American leaders, and a reexamination of policies would counteract the dilemma. On the other hand, nearly 90% of parents indicated misperceptions of race and ability, testing, and the belief that teachers were unable to recognize the potential of African American students contributed to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education. However, parents acknowledged the lack of parental awareness regarding giftedness and the lack

of African American teachers as contributing factors as well. Parents agreed with teachers regarding an increase in teacher training to recognize gifted abilities in minority students. Results of the study led to the Chadwell Transformative Model for Gifted Program Reform (Michael-Chadwell, 2010). The model was used to assist districts in reorganizing gifted and talented programs to increase identification for underserved students. The following year, additional literature on the role parenting played in gifted education was conducted with a particular interest in African American fathers.

Tarek C. Grantham and Malik S. Henfield (2011) evaluated the role African American fathers played in the gifted education of their students. Grantham and Henfield (2011) posed two main research questions: 1) What are stereotypical views of African American men that undermine their motivation to become involved with schools or that hinder teachers' desire to work with African American men? 2) What resources and support exists for gifted education teachers to engage African American fathers in the education of their students? The researchers viewed African American fathers as impactful advocates in the role of underrepresentation of African American kids in gifted programs and the widening achievement gap between African American and White students (Grantham & Henfield, 2011). The work suggested that gifted education teachers focused on negative portrayals of African American fathers that may have caused an internalized stereotypical negative expectation of African American students (Grantham & Henfield, 2011).

Additionally, the work focused on race and gender norms in gifted education that might have served as a deterrent to African American fathers to participate in gifted education. Attention was given to the overwhelming representation of the White female presence in gifted programs. African American fathers expressed comfort in allowing African American mothers to

participate in school functions and address concerns due to White female comfort in engaging with African American women versus African American men (Grantham & Henfield, 2011). Grantham and Henfield (2011) suggested that African American fathers may not view school participation as a parental role. Therefore, educators were encouraged to acknowledge non-traditional ways in which African American fathers could participate and support educational development. Otherwise, African American fathers may have felt “out of sorts or emasculated” by participating in “female-dominated” activities.

The information and research findings in this section suggested that parental involvement in gifted identification is essential. It appears that African American parental involvement is present and positive, however, differs from the traditional means of advocacy typically seen in White parental involvement. Nonetheless, communication between parents and schools were/are vital in order for African American students to be assessed and properly identified as gifted learners. Furthermore, it appears that again, cultural awareness and sensitivity toward when and how African American parents show their support and advocacy for their children’s education is imperative. This factor was the fourth and final factor discussed in this section detailing the contributors to the disproportionality of African American students in gifted education. Moving beyond this subject, the fifth and final contributing factor (test bias) is explored briefly as explained earlier in this chapter. Again, test bias is only reviewed briefly in the following section due to the popularity and broad research conducted on this topic. Yet, for the purpose of this study, it was still important to acknowledge the role of student testing in gifted identification. The role of test bias is common and significant. Research has noted that this factor alone has greatly impacted the proportionality of African American students in the gifted identification and enrollment process due to culturally biased features.

Test Bias

In the work entitled *Culturally Responsive Classrooms: Affirming Culturally Different Gifted Students*, Donna Ford explained that in order for minorities to be identified as gifted, the measures used to assess their talents must be culturally diverse (Ford, 2010). As mentioned in Chapter I, standardized testing is a common practice used to evaluate student appropriateness for gifted education. In fact, Ford et al. (2002) mentioned that 88.5% of states relied on standardized testing as the chief identification tool in gifted evaluation. Additionally, over 90% of school districts included test results in the gifted identification process (Ford et al., 2002). Although, testing is a common practice for gifted identification, concerns have been raised regarding its ability to capture the intellectual abilities of minorities (Ford et al., 2002; Ford & Whiting, 2009; Naglieri, 2009). Due to the lack of cultural sensitivity expressed in multiple standardized assessments, African American students' savviness in oral traditions, communalism and spirituality were not evaluated and seen as evidence of intelligence or academic ability (Ford et al., 2002). In fact, traditional assessments aimed to measure cognitive intelligence and ability has been critiqued for having a biased structure that limited opportunities for minorities in academia and in the workforce (Ford & Whiting, 2009). Intrinsically, traditional assessments were culturally loaded and heavily impacted by linguistics and vocabulary. These areas of assessment tend to impact the performance of African Americans resulting in a score of at least one standard deviation below White test takers (Ford & Whiting, 2009). In another study, Ford (2010) suggested that educators considered the following questions when incorporating standardized assessments in the evaluation process (Ford, 2010, pp. 52-53):

1. Are the measures valid and reliable for the specific culturally different students and group?

2. How can educators decrease bias in the measures (e.g. tests, check lists, forms, etc.) that they use or must adopt for evaluation and gifted education decisions?
3. Have all students had opportunities to be evaluated in ways that are compatible with how they learn and communicate?
4. Do students have opportunities to show their learning via speeches, presentations, skits, research, and other modalities?

In 2009, John Naglieri conducted a study on the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test. The results indicated that small differences existed between African American and White test takers (Naglieri, 2009). This research examined 20, 270 White, African American, and Hispanic children to find out if the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test would identify similar percentages of participants between the demographic groups for gifted identification. Naglieri (2009) found that 5.6 percent of Whites, 5.1 percent of African Americans and 4.4 percent of Hispanics scored in the ninety-fifth percentile or higher while 2.5 percent Whites, 2.6 percent African Americans, and 2.3 percent Hispanics scored in the top ninety-eighth percentile. Thus, the percentages of children identified for gifted services were similar across race and ethnic groups, which suggested that the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test “addressed the problem of the underrepresentation of minority students in gifted education” (p. 5). Consequently, it’s mystifying why educators prefer the use of traditional standardized tests so “exclusively and extensively” (Ford et al., 2002) instead of imploring the use of nonverbal ability tests to lesson test bias and identify more minority students in gifted education.

In a different and prior study, Ford et al. (2002) explained the continued use of traditional standardized assessments. The research described three explanations:

1. The fault rests within the test

2. The fault rests with the educational environment (e.g. poor instruction and lack of access to high quality education contributes to poor test scores), or
3. The fault rests with (or within) the student (e.g. he/she is cognitively inferior or “culturally deprived”). (Ford et al., 2002, p. 54)

Ford et al. (2002) expressed that educators that adopt the third explanation in which fault lies with or within the student, has removed themselves from having any responsibility in correcting the problem at hand. In fact, it was explained that educators of this theory believed intelligence was innate and “static”, meaning it could not be changed or altered. Educators were encouraged to understand that verbally based assessments effectively identified White middle-class students but routinely neglected to capture the true abilities of students who perform low on culturally loaded tests, had test anxiety, perform poorly in artificial or lab-like settings, had low achievement motivation, and learned differently than White students (p. 55). Therefore, it could be argued that identification procedures should adopt non-verbal assessments that can measure giftedness without the emphasis on language and vocabulary. As demonstrated, testing has an enormous impact on the gifted identification process and thus, has been identified as one of the contributing factors to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education. While these factors provide some insight into the disparities seen in African American gifted enrollment, the researcher looked to the literature to investigate the relationship school administrators have to the under identification of African Americans in gifted programs.

School Leadership

School leadership is defined in this work as policies, practices, and modalities that govern and guide teaching and learning in an educational system. This study interprets the role of school administrators (in particular, school principals) as building level executives that execute (and in

many cases create) school policies, practices, and modalities that are used in the everyday operation of a school. During the literature review for the current study, virtually no research was found that investigated administrators' roles in gifted education identification for African American students. This researcher was successful in locating many scholarly articles that either discussed school leadership or gifted identification for African American students separately. However, there was an article that examined school leadership from a culturally responsive perspective that was useful in the current study. Additionally, there was a pioneer study found in the late 1990's about effective school administration that was useful in the current study as well.

Blasé and Blasé (1999) surveyed 809 teachers from all over the US to examine teachers' perspectives of effective instructional leadership. Participants were asked to:

1. Describe one characteristic of a principal (in which they have worked for) whom had a positive impact on their classroom teaching
2. Describe one characteristic of a principal (in which they have worked for) whom had a negative impact on their classroom teaching
3. Describe the effects of principals' behaviors on classroom instruction, the principals' apparent goals, and the effectiveness of the principals' behaviors

Results from the survey indicated that teachers identified effective principals as those whom talked with teachers to promote reflection and professional development. Teachers indicated that effective leadership took place when principals' provided suggestions, feedback, praise, modeling, and asked for the advice and opinions of teachers. Also, teachers described positive leadership when principals' listened to teachers, shared personal experiences, examples and demonstrations, gave teachers choices, offered professional literature, acknowledged teachers' strengths, and focused on improving instruction (p.134). Additionally, teachers acknowledged

these six strategies that effective principal leaders use to promote teacher professional development: 1) emphasizing the study of teaching and learning; 2) supporting collaboration efforts among educators; 3) developing coaching relationships among educators; 4) encouraging and supporting redesign of programs; 5) applying the principles of adult learning, growth, and development to all phases of staff development; and 6) implementing action research to inform instructional decision making (p. 135).

The results found in Blasé and Blasé (1999) provided literature on effective school leadership from a teacher standpoint. This perspective is important when considering ways in which principals can encourage equitable access to gifted education for minority students through direct leadership of teachers. While principals are not typically a part of the gifted identification process, literature on school administration coupled with literature about cultural relevance in gifted identification, may lend suggestions on how school administrators could impact the process from their position. The results seen in Blasé and Blasé (1999) concerning the importance teachers place on open, reflective communication with their principals, is an approach discussed in critical race theory and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Parker and Villalpando (2007) collected literature that focused on critical race theory and “its place in educational leadership and policy (p. 521)” in the K-12 and higher education arenas. The literature highlighted in their work was reviewed to identify strategies that could be used in educational reform with the goal of acknowledging the struggles and hardships of people of color in the educational system. Shedding light on this topic was said by Parker and Villalpando (2007) as a means to “deal with the issue of trust/mistrust between education leaders and teachers/faculty and students of color and their families and communities” (p. 523). The authors stated that there is enough literature to suggest strategies that will increase student performance

and school improvement through racial equity. While this research may be present across several different disciplines; in regards to racial equity in gifted education, this researcher has experienced the gaps that exist between culturally relevant teaching, gifted identification, and school leadership. The following section discuss the gaps within the existing literature, and the need for additional insight into the issue of disproportionality of African American students in gifted education and the role of school administrators.

Gap in the Existing Research

The current literature review identified ability tracking, teacher perspectives of African American learners, the under-preparation of African American students, parental involvement and test bias as contributing factors to the underrepresentation of African American students in gifted education. There were several connections found among the five major contributors. The research exposed in these areas identified cultural bias, the lack of educator training, and student self-efficacy as additional factors that influence the discrepancies presented in Chapter II. The literature included research data and explicit recommendations for cultural change and increased African American enrollment in gifted education. Also, diversity awareness and cultural training for teachers were mentioned in nearly all of the research reviews as a way to counter bias perceptions of African American students' (and other minorities) ability to learn. However, in the review of existing research literature, hardly any connections are made between the aforementioned findings and the role of school principals as the executive leaders of public schools. Furthermore, a common solution found and recommended in the existing research literature is the use of culturally responsive teaching. Nonetheless, there was also limited research found that connects culturally responsive teaching to the leadership of school principals and their role in the gifted identification process for African American students. Thus, there is a

substantial lack of research findings that note aggressive and explicit methods for radical change on behalf of school leaders concerning the underrepresentation of African American learners in gifted education programs. This gap in the existing research guided this study in the exploration of school principals and their connection to the disproportionality of African American students in gifted education. Traditionally, principals are not seen as direct participants in the gifted education process. However, as school leaders, principals are held responsible for assuring equity in education and advanced educational opportunities for all students. With this premise, this study examined elementary principals. In this study, the researcher suspected to see greater proportionality in gifted education in schools in which principals exhibited greater knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices. Guided by the literature, it was assumed that there would be a greater likelihood that the proportion of African American students would closely align with the overall African American enrollment in schools with building leader that were well versed and reinforced CRT in curriculum and instruction.

Conclusion

During the search for literature to be shared in the literature review, information on leadership and gifted education were found in separate research studies. Leadership literature was geared toward general education and the managerial maintenance of a school staff, budget, and general curriculum and instruction; while gifted education included the five factors mentioned above. When searching for educator support or influence in gifted education, most results were restricted to an audience of teachers and counselors, not school administrators. The lack of collaborative literature incorporating administrative leadership in gifted education, displayed the need to conduct the current study. In search of educational equity, all educators, especially administrators must make concerted efforts to dismantle social and racial injustice operating in educational systems. It is not enough to expect such a grand reform to rest on the

shoulders of teachers and counselors alone. One of the major goals of this study was to bridge the gap between school leadership and the proportionate gifted enrollment for African American students. To do this, Chapter III will outline the research methodology, research design, and data analysis used in the study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Previously, Chapter II provided a literature review of the contributing factors to the disproportionality of African American enrollment in gifted education programs. This research study examined the disparities seen in gifted education and the relationships between a) elementary principals' perceptions, knowledge, and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices and b) principals' reported knowledge and support of North Carolina's AIG standards and the proportionality of African American students in gifted education programs. The initial objective was to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between elementary school principals' knowledge of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) practices and greater proportionality between the percentages of African American students enrolled in the school versus that of African American students enrolled in the AIG program. Consequently, the study investigated whether or not principals who reported higher rates of knowledge and support of CRT had a higher rates of African American proportionality in their AIG program. The study also examined rates of African American proportionality for principals who reported their knowledge and/or support of gifted state standards. In the end, the African American proportionality of both groups of principals were then compared to that of principals that reported little to no knowledge and/or support of CRT and gifted state standards. Chapter III outlines the methodology, research questions, and hypothesis that guided this research. Included in this chapter (and presented in the next section) are the relevant theoretical frameworks employed in the study and how those frameworks were used to interpret the data.

Culturally responsive teaching stems from Critical Race Theory which promotes racially sensitive epistemologies that challenge status quo ideologies, acknowledgement of racism, and the commitment to social justice (Bernal-Delgado, 2002). Critical Race Theory is able to appraise incidents using the lens of power, privilege, and control; an important factor when evaluating the level of cultural capital and social justice for African American students and citizens (Glesne, 2011, p. 10). The theory investigates societal racism that has become a ‘normal’ practice in classifying and identifying others (Glesne, 2011, p. 10). Accordingly, culturally responsive teaching uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective to diverse learners (Williams, 2014). In this study, proportionality in gifted enrollment was the variable that represented the presence (or lack thereof) social justice for African Americans. Furthermore, disparate impact was considered in this study as a possible way to explain the potential absence of proportionality revealed. The presence of disproportionality in gifted programs was symbolic of racial inequity in societal structures (Sullivan & Artiles, 2011). The following sections include the research questions, hypotheses with explanations, and the research design used in the study, data analysis and synopsis of the methodology. Afterwards, Chapter IV will display the findings of the research study while Chapter V provides a summary and recommendations for future research.

Research Questions, Hypotheses, & Explanations

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between elementary school principals’ knowledge and perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American students in the gifted education program at their schools. The study was led by three research questions and hypotheses. The following key terms are abbreviated in this section: Research Question (RQ), Hypothesis (H), and Explanation (E). The

subscripts and/or numbers following the abbreviated terms are provided to keep each hypothesis and explanation organized with the appropriate research question.

- **RQ1:** *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices?*
 - **H1:** It was hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices.
 - **E1:** Due to the functioning agreement between North Carolina AIG Standards and the goals of culturally responsive teaching practices, it is possible that a correlative relationship exists between principals' knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG Standards and their knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices and vice versa. If the correlative relationship exists, it may be indicative of the level of importance principals' place on purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices in order to achieve equity and diversity in the AIG identification process.
- **RQ2:** *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?*

- **H2:** It was hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African Americans enrolled in AIG.
 - E1: The working premise of this hypothesis is that if a principal supported purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices than s/he would more than likely engage in strategies and best practices when supervising teachers, counselors, and other gifted specialist through school leadership which would ultimately result in better proportionality of the percentage of African American students enrolled in his/her school and in the AIG program.
- **RQ3:** *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?*
 - H3: It was hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African Americans enrolled in AIG
 - E3: There are many North Carolina AIG Standards. In regards to multiculturalism and diversity, a few of these standards require equitable access and enrollment of minority students. If the AIG program is supportive of these standards, then the number of African American students identified in AIG should reflect higher levels of proportionality than if this were not so. Here, the expectation is that a principal's knowledge of the North Carolina AIG Standards should show a

relationship to culturally responsive teaching practices with the result being a higher level of proportionality in gifted enrollment for African American students than if this were not the case.

Research Design

The research was a quantitative study with non-experimental and non-parametric features. The study was cross sectional in that it observed the current knowledge and support levels of elementary school principals concerning the North Carolina AIG Standards and culturally responsive teaching at one particular time and not over a period of time. The study incorporated a relational design as the relationships between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG Standards and culturally responsive teaching to the actual proportionality of African American students enrolled in AIG were investigated. The research used a questionnaire as its instrument tool to exam these variables. The following subcategories in this section will explain the participants and sampling procedures, instrumentation, and data collection process. Figure 2 and Table 7 are included in this section to serve as visual aids. Figure 2 displays the North Carolina county map which provides a reference to the geographic location of each participating school district. Table 7 provides the demographic of each school district targeted for participation.

Participants and Sampling

A sample of elementary principals were solicited to participate in the questionnaire. After obtaining permission from area superintendents and/or the necessary review committees (see Appendix B), an email with a description of the study and hyperlink to access the questionnaire was provided by the researcher and forwarded to elementary principals (through district powered email) by the district's contact person, inviting them to participate in the study. The study was limited to principals of elementary schools serving grades 3-5 only. Therefore, the study had the potential to receive feedback from 387 principal

participants. This information was obtained through the Education First North Carolina (state) Report Card system. However, this researcher's goal was to receive at least 20 percent participation (n=77).

All participants were employed full-time by public school districts located in central North Carolina, the focal area of the research study. Central North Carolina consists of the following counties: Alamance, Anson, Cabarrus, Caswell, Chatham, Cumberland, Davidson, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Guilford, Halifax, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Lee, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Moore, Nash, Northampton, Orange, Person, Randolph, Richmond, Robeson, Rockingham, Rowan, Scotland, Stanly, Union, Vance, Wake, Warren, and Wilson (NC Office of Archives & History, 2004). Figure 2 displays a North Carolina County map. Each county was examined using the North Carolina Report Card system to identify school districts with at least 25 percent of students identified as Black or African American. This criteria allowed the researcher to identify school districts with moderate to high enrollment of African American students as a whole. Though this data is representative of the district and not each elementary school in which comparisons will be made, it was the best guide to identify schools that would likely have a moderate to high African American enrollment as well. However, each participant was asked in the questionnaire to report actual school demographic data at his or her school. Table 7 consists of a list of counties meeting the 25 percent African American enrollment criteria. Additionally, Table 7 displays student demographics and the average number of students within a district's elementary school. Of the thirty-five counties located in central North Carolina, twenty counties met the criteria. This study was reviewed and was exempted from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Institution Review Board (IRB) process due virtually no risk to subjects for participating in the study.

Figure 2. North Carolina County Map



Source: North Carolina Maps by the Institute of Museum and Library Services
Retrieved from http://www2.lib.unc.edu/dc/ncmaps/browse_location.html

Table 7
Demographics of Central North Carolina School Districts

County	Number of Elementary Schools	Average Students Enrollment	District % of African American Students	District % of White Students
Anson	6	333	58%	34%
Caswell	4	322	36%	54%
Cumberland	50	450	45%	33%
Durham	29	521	51%	19%
Franklin	8	504	31%	51%
Granville	9	427	33%	51%
Guilford	69	478	41%	37%
Halifax	6	246	86%	4%
Harnett	13	562	25%	51%
Hoke	8	501	37%	27%
Mecklenburg	95	717	42%	32%
Nash	15	467	50%	35%
Northampton	4	231	80%	15%
Person	7	326	34%	52%
Richmond	7	486	37%	46%
Robeson	23	459	25%	16%
Scotland	7	352	46%	32%
Vance	10	321	61%	22%
Warren	3	271	67%	18%
Wilson	14	420	45%	35%

Note. Information presented in this table derived from data located in the State Report Card under each county’s “district profile”. The webpage provided below is for the entire State Report Card database. Navigation to each county’s “district profile” through this site is required to view table information Source: Education First North Carolina Report Card, State Report Cards, 2012-2013
Retrieved from <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src/>

Instrumentation

The questionnaire used in this study was adopted from Dr. Kebbler Williams' *Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching* (Williams, 2014). The instrument is designed to assess elementary principals' perceptions of the level of culturally responsive teaching practices in use at their school (Williams, 2014). The questionnaire includes two parts (See Appendix C). Part I contains twelve demographic questions, three in which were taken directly from Dr. Williams' assessment, four questions were reworded to assess AIG data, and five questions were added to Part I. These questions were included to collect AIG size and racial demographics, NC AIG Standards and culturally responsive teaching information, and participant perspective information needed for data analysis. Part II of the questionnaire consisted of eighteen items/statements taken directly from Dr. William's original thirty-seven item survey. Eight of these items were selected as indicators of culturally responsive teaching practices while the remaining ten items were selected as indicators of the North Carolina AIG Standards. A request to use the survey was provided to Dr. Williams verbally and in writing by the researcher (see Appendix D). Permission was granted. Due to the use of an existing instrument, reliability and validity were already established.

Originally, Dr. Williams adapted her study from the *Equity in Special Education Placement: A School Self-Assessment Guide for Culturally Responsive Practice*, created by Richards, Artiles, Klinger, and Brown (2005). The original assessment was established to assist elementary schools in creating culturally responsive schools (Williams, 2014, p. 54). After receiving permission to alter the assessment by the creators, content validity was first obtained in Dr. Williams' study through expert certification. The survey was disseminated to four experts in the field in which they were asked to provide feedback on the survey by rating each question "based on its level of importance as an aspect of cultural responsiveness" (Williams, 2014, p.

56). Dr. Williams also conducted cognitive interviews with two elementary school principals and one elementary school assistant principal to gain feedback and insight into the designed survey questions (Williams, 2014). Additionally, Dr. Williams conducted an 83 participant pilot survey which distributed the survey to UNC Chapel Hill's Educational Leadership Doctoral Student Listserv over the course of 2 ½ weeks (Williams, 2014).

In this research study, reliability refers to how consistent a measure evaluates what it is supposed to (Oxford University Press, 2010). Therefore, the results of the assessment were expected to be consistent each time the assessment was implemented regardless of how often the assessment was used. In this research study, validity refers to the level in which a measure assesses what it sets out to measure (Oxford University Press, 2010). The instrument was disseminated to participants using Qualtrics, a survey software that distributed the assessment tool electronically. This method of distribution was selected to increase respondent participation due to easy access to the questionnaire. Electronic distribution of surveys has been said to be time efficient, cost efficient, and noted to increase the likelihood that respondents report more truthfully on written assessments than in face-to-face interviews (Oxford University Press, 2010).

Data Collection Process

Formal intent letters describing the research study was emailed to area superintendents or appropriate designees of the aforementioned school districts requesting participation in the research study (See Appendix B, letter 1). Each letter detailed the purpose of the study and a privacy and confidentiality clause assuring anonymity for district participation. Upon approval, all potential participants received an email notification through the central office listserv inviting them to participate in the study with a link to access the questionnaire.

Participating administrators were asked to complete the survey within a one week window (See Appendix B, letter 2). In response to participants that did not complete the survey in the allotted timeframe, two additional reminder emails were provided by the researcher and forwarded to participants by the superintendent or designee to encourage completion (See Appendix B, letter 3). Following the closing of the survey session, the researcher organized and analyzed data collected using SPSS.

Measurement

The research study was centered on three research questions: 1) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and a principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices? 2) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG? and 3) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG? Of these research questions, the study included two independent variables and three dependent variables.

Independent Variables

Independent variable 1 (IV1) was principals' reported knowledge of teachers' purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices in instruction. This variable was measured by participants' responses to eight items from the Teaching and Learning section of the questionnaire. Independent Variable 2 (IV2) was principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards. This variable was measured by principals' responses to ten

items from the Classroom Achievement and Assessment and Behavior Management of the questionnaire.

In selecting these eighteen items of the thirty-seven used in the original survey, the researcher conducted a culturally responsive teaching and AIG standards relationship chart (See Appendix E). The chart was used to compare each survey question to each gifted standard identified in the published NC AIG Standards. Items were selected based off the elements identified in the NC AIG Standards as culturally relevant items to assess giftedness of multicultural students. Using a Likert scale, principals reported their knowledge of teachers' purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices relating to the following items:

- Teachers are knowledgeable about the second language acquisition process and how to support students who are English language learners.
- Teachers modify their instruction so that students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and ability groups will have an equal opportunity to learn.
- Teachers inform students about and give them tools to disrupt stereotyping and other related biases that have negative effects on racial and ethnic relations.
- Teachers have high expectations for all students to reach their highest potential, regardless of their background or differences.
- Teachers work from the premise that “all children can learn” and continue to attempt different instructional approaches until each child is reached.
- Teachers feel a strong sense of responsibility for all students, including students referred for or already placed in special education.

- Teachers are experts in instruction and management and know how to effectively challenge and support their students in culturally sensitive ways.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about and skilled in using strategies for teaching English language learners (including sheltered English techniques).

Similarly, principals reported their knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG Standards upheld via classroom instruction and assessment as well as behavior management. Using the Likert scale, principals' rated the frequency of the following items which indicated knowledge/support of the NC AIG Standards:

- Classroom assessment is conducted with fairness and sensitivity towards students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Teachers use a range of assessment strategies that provide students from diverse backgrounds opportunities to demonstrate their mastery and skills, including the opportunity to share what they know in their native language if they wish.
- Administrators and teachers use a variety of instruments and strategies to assist students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups in meeting State standards and other mandated requirements (e.g., No Child Left Behind Act).
- Teachers utilize information from several sources, including families, in assessing students' achievement.
- The school identifies and uses multiple assessment tools and strategies that are research-based and culturally valid.
- The school provides school and district-wide training in the administration of assessment tools and methods (i.e., standardized tests, oral presentations, group work, allowing students to work at school, etc.) that consider the student's cultural background.

- The school knows when and how to provide accommodations to students with special needs and English language learners.
- The school ensures that high stakes tests have been validated for the purpose for which they are used and have been standardized on populations of students similar to their students.
- Administration, teachers, and support personnel are knowledgeable about differences in cultural practices that might impact on student behavior.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about certain behaviors that are consistent with students' cultural background so as not to consider them deviant.

Each of these independent variables (IV 1: Principals' Knowledge of CRT Practices and IV 2: Principals' Knowledge of AIG standards) were measured and evaluated to detect relationships with three dependent variables (DV 1: % of Black students enrolled in AIG, DV 2: % of Black students schoolwide, and DV 3: Proportionality).

Dependent Variables

Dependent Variable 1 was the percentage of African American students enrolled in AIG. The percentages for Dependent Variable 1 were calculated by dividing the number of African American students enrolled in the AIG program by the total number of students enrolled in the AIG program. This calculation produced the percentage of African American students enrolled in AIG programs. In order to calculate this variable, information was obtained through school and AIG demographic questions asked of each participant in the questionnaire. Participants were asked to report the total number of students enrolled in his/her AIG program as well as the number of American Indian, Asian/Asian American, African American/African American,

Hispanic or Latino/a, Multi-Racial, Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, and White students represented in the AIG program.

$$\text{DV1. } \frac{\text{Number of Black students enrolled in AIG}}{\text{Number of total students enrolled in AIG}} = \% \text{ of Black students enrolled in AIG}$$

Dependent Variable 2 was the percentage of African American students schoolwide. Dependent Variable 2 was calculated by dividing the number of African American students schoolwide by the number of total students schoolwide. This calculation provided the percentage of African American students schoolwide per school. To calculate this variable, Principals were also asked to report the total number of students enrolled at his/her school as well as the number of American Indian, Asian/Asian American, African American/African American, Hispanic or Latino/a, Multi-Racial, Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, and White students represented in the total student population.

$$\text{DV2. } \frac{\text{Number of Black students schoolwide}}{\text{Number of total students schoolwide}} = \% \text{ of Black students schoolwide}$$

Dependent Variable 3 was the proportion of African Americans enrolled in the AIG program. Dependent Variable 3 was calculated by dividing the percentage of African American students enrolled in AIG by the percentage of African American students schoolwide. This calculation produced the proportion of African American students enrolled in the AIG program. After this information is gathered and calculated, the numeric percentages are then compared to suggest proportionality. For example, if twenty percent of the student body is African American, a proportionate representation of African American students enrolled in AIG at that particular school would be twenty percent as well.

$$\text{DV3. } \frac{\% \text{ of Black students enrolled in AIG}}{\% \text{ of Black students schoolwide}} = \text{Proportionality}$$

As mentioned, the questionnaire used a Likert Scale to record principals' responses to eighteen statements indicating knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices and NC AIG standards. Participants had the choice to reply to each statement (excluding demographic items) using the following responses:

Almost Always = occurs more than 75% of the time

Frequently = occurs 50 to 75% of the time

Sometimes = occurs 26 to 49% of the time

Almost Never = occurs 25% or less of the time

Not Applicable = does not apply to your school

Using this scale, there is a 4 point response scale where "Almost Always" is represented by a 4, "Frequently" is represented by a 3, "Sometimes" is represented by a 2, "Almost Never" is represented by a 1, and "Not Applicable" is represented by a 0 and was treated as missing data. For each independent variable, all responses were added and divided by the total number of questions to generate a composite variable for CRT Knowledge and Knowledge of AIG Standards.

In modeling the tool after Dr. Williams' assessment, it is understood that the closer Pearson's r is to -1, the stronger the relationship is between two variables in the negative direction (Williams, 2014, pp. 69). Conversely, the closer Pearson's r is to +1, the stronger the relationship is between two variables in the positive direction (Williams, 2014, pp. 69). The study includes a p-value for a z test at 0.10 in order to detect statistical significance with a small sample size ($n=26$). Furthermore, it is important to note the potential error of interpretation.

The research used a familiar questionnaire adapted to examine the goals identified in this study. The existing assessment evaluated principals' knowledge and/or support of culturally

responsive teaching practices. The adapted items on the survey assessed information concerning giftedness and proportionality. While every effort was made to mask the exact intent of survey questions and statements to limit favorable responding of participants, results of the study simply derived from principals' reports of what is going on in their schools. Unfortunately, the research study was unable to assess what educational practices actually took place at the school level. This of course presented a potential error of interpretation. Onward, the following section details the process of data analysis.

Data Analysis

SPSS was the statistical system used to analyze survey data and identify the existence (if any) of relationships between variables. The research examined principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching and their reported knowledge and/or support of the NC AIG standards while comparing the range of proportionality in the schools' AIG program compared to the schools' student enrollment numbers. As an indicator of significance, the alpha level was set to 0.10 due to a small sample size (n=26). SPSS was used to detect the strength and direction of all relationships present. Furthermore, the theoretical frameworks of critical race theory, culturally responsive teaching, and disparate impact, were used during data collection and analysis. These frameworks were considered in the interpretation of the data, suggestions made for education personnel, and in the implications for further research identified in Chapters IV and V.

Data Interpretation

It was hypothesized that a statistically significant relationship existed between principals' knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices and their knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG Standards with the proportionality of African American students enrolled in their AIG programs. The research study relied on culturally responsive

teaching practices and Critical Race Theory as a theoretical framework to analyze data obtained from the questionnaire. Additionally, the lens of disparate impact was used in the understanding of gifted proportionality for African American students. It was suspected that schools with higher reports of a) principal's knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices and b) principal's knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards what demonstrate schools with higher rates of gifted proportionality for African American students. The rationale behind this speculation was the connection between belief and action. It was supposed that principals exhibiting great knowledge and support of these modalities would more than likely engage in leadership practices that aim to increase multiculturalism and diversity in gifted enrollment. Consequently, the proportionate enrollment of African American students were thought to be indicative of school leadership that was culturally responsive and standard driven. In the next section, Chapter IV will describe the results gathered and analyzed from the questionnaire.

CHAPTER IV RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

African American students have been severely underrepresented in gifted programs (National Education Association, 2007, p. 7). Additionally, this limited access to gifted education programs among African American students has created an unequal environment that positions African American students at a disadvantage in comparison to their White counterparts. This discrepancy is important because without change, large numbers of African American students may not receive equitable access to a rigorous, challenging, creative curriculum. In order to be socially and occupationally competitive, it is imperative that African American students are exposed to and receive the same educational opportunities as White students.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between elementary school principals' knowledge and perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American students in the gifted education program at their schools. Researchers of this topic have identified and reported catalysts that have contributed to this problem, including ability tracking, teacher perceptions, and the under-preparation of African American students, parental involvement, and test bias.

In Chapter II, the term *disparate impact* was defined as “policies that appear neutral but have a disproportionate, adverse impact on individuals of a protected class based on race, color, gender, nationality, family status, disability, or religion” (Long & Hanchey, 2015, p. 8). In addition, the term *disproportionality* refers to the “overrepresentation” or “underrepresentation”

of a particular demographic group enrolled in special education classes or gifted education classes relative to the enrollment of the demographic group in the overall student population (National Association for Bilingual Education, 2002). The research conducted in this study sought to discern whether principals' knowledge and support of North Carolina Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) standards, coupled with culturally responsive teaching practices, were correlated with the proportionality of African American students in academically gifted programs and intellectually gifted programs. The researcher used disproportionality as a measure of disparate impact in gifted classes in which the number of identified African American students in AIG programs significantly differed from the number of African American students enrolled in the entire school. In the next section, the organization of Chapter IV is presented, and the details of the current study are explained.

Organization of the Chapter

In Chapter IV, the researcher describes the assessment tool used to gather information about elementary school principals' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and the disproportionality of African American students in gifted programs. In the sections below, this chapter presents the research questions, reliability and response rates, descriptive statistics, the research variables, the results for each research questions, and a summary. Overall, the goal of Chapter IV is to organize the results of the study so that the relationships are clear among (a) the researcher's hypotheses, (b) the research literature on this topic, and (c) the results of this study.

Research Questions

The study consisted of three research questions and three hypotheses:

- RQ1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and a principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices?
 - H1: There would be a relationship between principals' reported knowledge/support of North Carolina AIG standards and principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices.
- RQ2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?
 - H2: There would be a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG.
- RQ3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?
 - H3: There would be a relationship between the proportionality of African American school enrollment and African American AIG enrollment of schools in which principals report knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards.

Reliability and Response Rate

To collect data for this study, the researcher used an existing instrument. With permission, the researcher used the *Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching* used Williams's

(2014) dissertation research. This instrument was selected because of its relevance to the North Carolina AIG standards. It also was selected because of its success in achieving reliability and validity while measuring culturally responsive teaching practices from the perspective of administrators. Several small additions were added to the instrument, including 5 demographic items. Minor alterations in the wording were made to 2 items in order to gather AIG student enrollment data and measure participants' knowledge of the North Carolina AIG standards. Because the researcher employed a verified existing questionnaire with acceptable psychometric data available, issues of reliability and validity were not problematic.

To begin the data collection process, the researcher sent personalized emails to superintendents of 20 central North Carolina public school districts and their designees (see Appendix B). Within the 20 districts invited to participate, the total number of potential participants in the central region included 387 elementary school principals. In reply to the emailed invitations, superintendents and or their designees responded via email to the invitation to participate. Of the 20 superintendents invited to participate in the study, 10 superintendents provided permission for elementary school principals in their respective districts to participate by completing a questionnaire. Four superintendents declined the invitation and did not provide permission for elementary school principals in their districts to participate in the study. Six superintendents failed to respond to the initial invitation, the three follow-up email invitations, various phone calls, and voicemail messages requesting their participation. Consequently, the total number of potential participants in the central region decreased from 387 elementary school principals to 60, which represented 15.5% of the total number of potential participants. Slightly more than one-third (n=26) of the 387 potential participants completed the *Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching* (SCRT), which represented an overall response rate of 6.7%.

Descriptive Statistics

Participants responded to Part I of the SCRT (12 items) that elicited information about (a) the demographic composition of their schools, (b) their level of knowledge and support of culturally responsive teaching practices and North Carolina AIG standards, and (c) their views on program proportionality in gifted education (see Tables 8 through 12 and Appendix F). The first five demographic items requested information about school size, student race, and the free-and-reduced-lunch status of students' schoolwide. These self-reported items were used to determine the proportion of AIG students in comparison to the total number of students. Participants were then invited to respond to an additional seven items related to the North Carolina AIG standards and culturally responsive teaching practices. These items were used to collect additional information about principals' involvement in the proportionality of students in AIG. Also, principals were asked to disclose their own racial and gender identity. Unfortunately, a technological malfunction occurred, resulting in a failure to save participants' racial and gender identity information; therefore, there was no way to use or report these data. Additionally, frequencies do not always equal 26 (i.e., the total number of participants) because some values were missing. These missing values resulted from principals answering many, but not all, items on the questionnaire.

Free and Reduced Lunch

Almost half of participants (48%, n=11) reported that 100% of their students receive free or reduced-priced lunch. The remaining participants reported a free or reduced lunch rate between 68-98% for their students. These rates are indicators of students' socio-economic status.

Table 8
Number of Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch

No. of Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch	No. of Schools	%
61-70	1	4.3
71-80	4	17.3
81-90	5	21.6
91-100	13	56.4
Total	23	99.6

Size and Racial Composition of Schools

Participants were asked to provide size and demographic data describing the entire student population at their respective schools. All 26 participants provided the number of total students enrolled in their elementary schools. However, not all participants reported the racial composition of their school (see Table 9).

Table 9

Total Number of Students and Racial Composition of Schools

School	No. of Am. Indians	No. of Asians	No. of African Am.	No. of Hispanic	No. Multi- Racial	No. Pacific Islanders	No. of Whites	Total Students
1	117	1	105	93	38	2	206	562
2	30		170		40		60	300
3	7		162		4		7	180
4	13	3	206	218	25	0	118	587
5	121		106	21	37		281	566
6	45	3	421	0	23	0	133	625
7		2	223	5			16	236
8	0	0	162	60	12	0	42	276
9	4	0	101	17	6	0	103	231
10								330
11	8		76	2	4		10	286
12	0		131	25	4	0	70	230
13			136		4		65	215
14	1	6	132	174	20	0	306	639
15	0	3	283	61	22	0	34	477
16	39	5	166	9	10		67	296
17			236	23	56		265	580
18								310
19								950
20	0	0	215	1	1	0	15	230
21								300
22	150	0	35	120	75		10	390
23								267
24	21	9	304	149	45	0	146	676
25	0	0	142	145	19	0	141	447
26	2	7	273	29	9	0	50	370
<i>M</i>	42.92	3.9	172.05	67.76	22.7	2	102.12	406

Size and Racial Composition of AIG Programs

Overall, AIG enrollments were low. For example, 78% of participants reported fewer than 25 students enrolled in AIG programs schoolwide (see Table 10). Similarly, 22% of participants reported fewer than 50 students enrolled in AIG programs schoolwide. Of the participants who responded (n=18), all reported that fewer than five American-Indian, Asian-American, and multi-racial students were enrolled in their respective AIG programs. Participants reported that no Pacific Islander students were enrolled in any AIG program. Similarly, 82% of participants reported that there were fewer than five Hispanic students enrolled in AIG programs. Overall, participants reported that up to 15 African American students and up to 25 White students were enrolled in AIG programs. In the next section, the calculation of these variables will be described.

Table 10

Total Number of Students and Racial Composition of Students in AIG Programs

School	No. of Am. Indians	No. of Asians	No. of African Am.	No. of Hispanic	No. of Multi- Racial	No. of Pacific Islander	No. of Whites	Total Students
1	2	0	2	2	1	0	9	16
2	2		15		3		6	26
3								
4	1	1	13	5	1	0	15	36
5	5	0	6	3	3	0	16	33
6	0	0	1	0	0	0	10	11
7			6				2	8
8	0	0	8	5	0	0	4	17
9	1	0	3	1	1	0	6	12
10								
11								
12			5				15	20
13			7				6	13
14								
15	0	0	8	2	1	0	5	16
16		1	3	1			18	23
17			1				2	3
18								
19								
20			4				6	10
21								
22		3	1	3	3		2	12
23			1					1
24								
25	0	0	4	7	0	0	24	35
26	1	0	4	2	0	0	6	13
Total	12	5	88	31	13	0	152	305
<i>M</i>	2	1.67	4.89	3.1	1.86	0	8.94	16.94

Dependent Variables

In this study, the researcher explored three dependent variables. Dependent Variable 1 was the percentage of African American students enrolled in AIG. The percentages for Dependent Variable 1 were calculated by dividing the number of African American students enrolled in the AIG program (see Table 10) by the total number of students enrolled in the AIG program (see Table 9). This calculation produced the percentage of African American students enrolled in AIG programs. Table 11 indicates that, on average, the schools participating in this study reported that approximately 36% of their African American students were enrolled in the AIG program, while approximately 17% of all students are enrolled in the AIG program.

$$\text{DV1. } \frac{\text{Number of Black students enrolled in AIG}}{\text{Number of total students enrolled in AIG}} = \% \text{ of Black students enrolled in AIG}$$

Dependent Variable 2 was the percentage of African American students schoolwide. Dependent Variable 2 was calculated by dividing the number of African American students schoolwide by the number of total students schoolwide (see Table 9). This calculation provided the percentage of African American students schoolwide per school (see Table 11). On average, most participating schools were populated with approximately 50% African American students.

$$\text{DV2. } \frac{\text{Number of Black students schoolwide}}{\text{Number of total students schoolwide}} = \% \text{ of Black students schoolwide}$$

Dependent Variable 3 was the proportion of African Americans enrolled in the AIG program. Dependent Variable 3 was calculated by dividing the percentage of African American students enrolled in AIG by the percentage of African American students schoolwide. This calculation produced the proportion of African American students enrolled in the AIG program. On average, schools were approximately 67% proportionate (see Table 15).

$$\text{DV3. } \frac{\% \text{ of Black students enrolled in AIG}}{\% \text{ of Black students schoolwide}} = \text{Proportionality}$$

Table 11
Descriptive Statistics for Dependent Variables

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max	<i>n</i>
No. of African American Students Enrolled in AIG	35.91	24.86	8.33	100	18
Total No. of Students Enrolled in AIG	16.93	10.22	.75	36	18
No. of African American Students Schoolwide	50.47	25.06	8.97	94.49	21
Total No. of Students Schoolwide	406	189.90	180	950	26
Proportion of African American Students Enrolled in AIG	.67	.28	.13	1.03	17

Note. Frequencies do not add to 26 (total number of participants) due to missing values.

Independent Variables

This study explored two independent variables. Independent Variable 1 was principals' reported knowledge of teachers' purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices in instruction. Independent Variable 2 was principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards (see Table 12). These variables served as indicators as to what extent culturally responsive teaching and AIG standards were executed in teacher delivered instruction schoolwide. These variables were then correlated to the dependent variable 3 with was the proportionality of African American students in AIG.

Table 12
Mean Scores for CRT Knowledge and AIG Knowledge among Participants

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max	<i>n</i>
IV 1: Principals' Knowledge of CRT Practices	2.86	.57	2.00	3.75	22
IV 2: Principals' Knowledge of AIG standards	3.13	.63	2.00	4.00	22

Note. Frequencies do not add to 26 (total number of participants) due to missing values.

Results

This study was guided by three research questions. Each research question was answered using Pearson correlation analysis. The researcher set an *alpha* level of .10 to determine statistical significance due to the small sample size (n=26).

Results of Research Question 1

RQ1: *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices?* This research question was answered by conducting a correlation analysis between (a) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards (see Table 12 and Table 13) and (b) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices (see Table 12 and Table 14). To measure principals' knowledge/support of North Carolina AIG standards, participants responded to 10 items in the questionnaire (see Table 13). To measure participants' knowledge/support of culturally responsive teaching (CRT), participants responded to eight items in the questionnaire (see Table 14).

Results indicated a statistically significant relationship ($r = .87, p < .10$) between (a) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and (b) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices. The analysis indicated an extremely small probability ($p = .000$) that this correlation is due to chance. Additionally, the Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = .87$) indicated a strong, positive relationship, suggesting that when the knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards are increased, principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching is increased as well. The high correlation between these variables are likely due to each variable measuring similar constructs of multiculturalism and diversity in instructional practice.

Table 13

Frequency and Mean Distributions for AIG Knowledge (N=22)

	Indicators of Cultural Responsiveness	Response Scale	Frequency	%	<i>M</i>
1.	Classroom assessment is conducted with fairness and sensitivity towards students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Almost Never	0	0	2.91
		Sometimes	9	40.9	
		Frequently	6	27.3	
		Almost Always	7	31.8	
2.	Teachers use a range of assessment strategies that provide students from diverse backgrounds opportunities to demonstrate their mastery and skills, including the opportunity to share what they know in their native language if they wish.	Almost Never	0	0	2.95
		Sometimes	7	31.8	
		Frequently	9	40.9	
		Almost Always	6	27.3	
3.	Administrators and teachers use a variety of instruments and strategies to assist students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups in meeting State standards and other mandated requirements (e.g., No Child Left Behind Act).	Almost Never	0	0	3.14
		Sometimes	4	18.2	
		Frequently	11	50	
		Almost Always	7	31.8	
4.	Teachers utilize information from several sources, including families, in assessing students' achievement.	Almost Never	1	5	3.00
		Sometimes	6	30	
		Frequently	5	25	
		Almost Always	8	40	
		Total	20	100	
5.	The school identifies and uses multiple assessment tools and strategies that are research-based and culturally valid.	Almost Never	0	0	3.27
		Sometimes	4	18.2	
		Frequently	8	36.4	
		Almost Always	10	45.5	
6.	The school provides school and districtwide training in the administration of assessment tools and methods (i.e., standardized tests, oral presentations, projects, group work, allowing students to work at school, etc.) that consider the student's cultural background.	Almost Never	1	4.5	3.00
		Sometimes	5	22.7	
		Frequently	9	40.9	
		Almost Always	7	31.8	
7.	The school knows when and how to provide accommodations to students with special needs and English language learners.	Almost Never	1	4.5	3.23
		Sometimes	4	18.2	
		Frequently	6	27.3	
		Almost Always	11	50	
8.	The school ensures that high stakes tests have been validated for the purpose for which they are used and have been standardized on populations of students similar to their students.	Almost Never	0	0	3.40
		Sometimes	2	10	
		Frequently	8	40	
		Almost Always	10	50	
		Total	20	100	
9.	Administration, teachers, and support personnel are knowledgeable about differences in cultural practices that might impact on student behavior.	Almost Never	0	0	3.36
		Sometimes	2	9.1	
		Frequently	10	45.5	
		Almost Always	10	45.5	
10.	Teachers are knowledgeable about certain behaviors that are consistent with students' cultural background so as not to consider them deviant.	Almost Never	0	0	3.05
		Sometimes	5	22.7	
		Frequently	11	50.0	
		Almost Always	6	27.3	

Note. Frequencies do not add to 26 (total number of schools) due to missing values

Table 14

Frequency and Mean Distributions for CRT Knowledge (N=22)

	Indicators of Cultural Responsiveness	Response Scale	Frequency	%	<i>M</i>
1.	Teachers are knowledgeable about the second language acquisition process and how to support students who are English language learners.	Almost Never	3	13.6	2.27
		Sometimes	12	54.5	
		Frequently	5	22.7	
		Almost Always	2	9.1	
2.	Teachers modify their instruction so that students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and ability groups will have an equal opportunity to learn.	Almost Never	0	0	2.91
		Sometimes	7	31.8	
		Frequently	10	45.5	
		Almost Always	5	22.7	
3.	Teachers inform students about and give them tools to disrupt stereotyping and other related biases that have negative effects on racial and ethnic relations.	Almost Never	1	4.5	2.77
		Sometimes	6	27.3	
		Frequently	12	54.5	
		Almost Always	3	13.6	
4.	Teachers have high expectations for all students to reach their highest potential, regardless of their background or differences.	Almost Never	0	0	3.32
		Sometimes	5	22.7	
		Frequently	5	22.7	
		Almost Always	12	54.5	
5.	Teachers work from the premise that “all children can learn” and continue to attempt different instructional approaches until each child is reached.	Almost Never	0	0	3.18
		Sometimes	4	18.2	
		Frequently	10	45.5	
		Almost Always	8	36.4	
6.	Teachers feel a strong sense of responsibility for all students, including students referred for or already placed in special education.	Almost Never	0	0	3.27
		Sometimes	3	13.6	
		Frequently	10	45.5	
		Almost Always	9	40.9	
7.	Teachers are experts in instruction and management and know how to effectively challenge and support their students in culturally sensitive ways.	Almost Never	0	0	2.82
		Sometimes	8	36.4	
		Frequently	10	45.5	
		Almost Always	4	18.2	
8.	Teachers are knowledgeable about and skilled in using strategies for teaching English language learners (including sheltered English techniques).	Almost Never	2	9.1	2.32
		Sometimes	12	54.5	
		Frequently	7	31.8	
		Almost Always	1	4.5	

Note. Frequencies do not add to 26 (total number of schools) due to missing values

Results of Research Question 2

RQ2: *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?* This research question was answered by conducting a correlation analysis between (a) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices (see Table 14) and (b) the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG (see Table 15).

The results of this correlation analysis indicated a statistically significant relationship ($r = .45, p < .10$) between (a) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices and (b) the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG. This analysis indicated that there is a small probability ($p = .104$) that the positive correlation between these two variables is due to chance. Additionally, the .45 Pearson correlation coefficient indicates a moderately strong, positive relationship, suggesting that as principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices is increased, the proportionality of students in AIG also may be increased.

Table 15
Proportionality of AIG Programs

School	No. of Total Students	No. of Total AIG Students	No. of African Am. Students in AIG	No. of African Am. Students in School	Proportionality
1	562	16	2	105	.67
2	300	26	15	170	1.02
3	587	36	13	206	1.03
4	566	33	6	106	.97
5	625	11	1	421	.13
6	236	8	6	223	.79
7	276	17	8	162	.80
8	231	12	3	101	.57
9	230	20	5	131	.44
10	215	13	7	136	.85
11	477	16	8	283	.84
12	296	23	3	166	.23
13	580	3	1	236	.82
14	230	10	4	215	.43
15	390	12	1	35	.93
16	447	1	4	142	.36
17	370	35	4	273	.42
<i>M</i>	389.29	17.18	5.35	177.12	.67

Note. Proportionality was calculated by dividing the number of African American students in AIG by the number of African American students in the school.

Table 16
Correlations between Principals' CRT Knowledge, AIG Knowledge, and Proportionality of African American Students

	CRT Knowledge	AIG Knowledge	Proportionality
CRT Knowledge		***.87	*.45
AIG Knowledge	***.87		** .53
Proportionality	*.45	** .53	

Note. * $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

Results of Research Question 3

RQ3: *Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG?* This research question was answered by conducting a correlation analysis between (a) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards (see Table 13) and (b) the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG (see Table 15). The results of this correlation analysis indicated a statistically significant relationship ($r = .53, p < .10$) between (a) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and (b) the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG. This analysis indicated that there is a small probability ($p = .05$) that the positive correlation between these two variables is due to chance. Additionally, the .53 Pearson correlation coefficient indicates a moderately strong, positive relationship, suggesting that when the knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards is increased, the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG also may be increased.

Summary

This current study adapted the *Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching* used in the *Elementary Principals' and Assistant Principals' Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices in North Carolina* (Williams, 2014). Additional items were included in the questionnaire by the researcher to gather additional information about North Carolina AIG standards. The questionnaire was offered to 20 central North Carolina school districts. Of these 20 districts, 10 districts agreed to participate. Within these 10 districts, 26 out of 60 potential participants responded to the electronic questionnaire, resulting in an overall response rate of 6.7%. Descriptive data was gathered from 26 schools and included the total school population, racial demographics, free and reduced lunch status, AIG program size, and racial AIG program demographics. Using SPSS, the researcher conducted correlation analyses using three variables: (a) principals' knowledge/support of NC AIG standards, (b) principals' knowledge/support of culturally responsive teaching practices, and (c) the proportionality of African American students in gifted education programs. The results indicated positive, statistically significant relationships between all three variables. The results indicated positive, statistically significant relationships between all pairs of variables. An additional analysis was done with duplicated data (N=52). The three correlations corresponding to the three hypotheses were identical and all statistically significant. In accordance with this researcher's hypotheses, it appears that as the knowledge and support of NC AIG standards and culturally responsive teaching practices increases, the proportionality of African American students tends to increase as well.

In Chapter V, the researcher discusses implications associated with the results of this analysis. Chapter V also presents the limitations of this study, suggestions for educational leaders, and suggestions for future research on the topic. Finally, the study concludes with an overall summary and closing statement.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

The current study investigated the relationship between elementary school principals' knowledge and perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American students in the gifted education program at their schools. The study explored three research questions to assess this relationship: 1) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of North Carolina AIG standards and a principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices? 2) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals who report purposeful and routine use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG? and 3) Is there a statistically significant relationship between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American student enrollment in AIG? The researcher of this study hypothesized that knowledge and support of both culturally responsive teaching practices and the North Carolina AIG standards would yield a more proportionate enrollment of African American students in gifted education programs. The results of the study supported this claim. A correlations analysis indicated a statistically significant relationship between a) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of culturally responsive teaching practices and the proportionality of African American gifted enrollment and b) principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards and the proportionality of African American gifted enrollment.

In previous chapters, literature was exposed to reveal the historical and contextual background of both gifted education and public education from the perspectives and experiences of African American students. This led to the statement of the problem and the significance of this study. Onward, a questionnaire was given to elementary principals in central North Carolina to examine their perspectives, knowledge, and support of culturally responsive teaching practices, gifted education standards, and proportionate enrollment of African American students in AIG. The results of the study were presented in Chapter IV. In Chapter V will expose the limitations of the current study and communicate suggestions for educational leaders, teachers, and counselors. Finally, Chapter V will identify implications for future research and provide a summary of what was examined and discovered in the study.

Discussion of Results and Implications

The results of the study illuminated three discussion points: a) disparate school-wide enrollment b) disproportionate AIG enrollment and c) principals' knowledge of gifted standards. A portion of the study gathered demographic information for school and AIG enrollment. Participants provided numeric data to describe the racial composition of their schools and of their gifted programs. Table 15 which was presented and discussed in Chapter IV, displayed the descriptive statistics for schools and AIG programs. On average, when calculating proportionality, participating schools had an average of 389 students schoolwide with about 177 students identified as African American ($389/177=45\%$). Results also indicated that on average, 17 students were enrolled in the gifted program and 5 of those students were African American.

Disparate School-Wide Enrollment

The data suggested that overall, elementary schools in North Carolina display a lot of inconsistency in the racial demographics of their schools. Some participants reported that their schools consisted of approximately only 9% African American students, while other participants

reported that their schools consisted of up to 95% African American students (see Table 11). These statistics communicate the fact that many public schools lack multiculturalism and diversity in student enrollment. This information could be indicative of biased racial and socioeconomic school assignment that has been investigated in educational research for years. If so, the issues of opportunity schooling presented in the literature review is evidence that from initial school assignment, African American children are not provided equitable access to rigorous education. Additional insight into this matter is significant in achieving social justice for minority students, and in this case, African American students.

Disproportionate AIG Enrollment

Some participants reported that low proportionality for African American students enrolled in AIG while other participants reported total proportionality for African American students in their AIG program (see Table 11). This discrepancy is representative of a non-diverse, disproportionate system, similar to that seen in the disparate enrollment of this study's participating schools. Awareness into the varying proportionality seen in AIG public schools may provide insight into policies and procedures that increase the disproportionality seen in AIG instead of dispelling it.

Principals' Knowledge of Gifted Standards

Principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the North Carolina AIG standards was evaluated as an independent variable. Results for this variable were displayed in Table 13. Findings indicated that most participants rated their knowledge and support of the North Carolina AIG standards at a moderate to high level. Results of this section showed a statistically significant relationship between AIG knowledge and proportionality. Insight into actual practices that demonstrate knowledge of gifted standards appear to influence how administrators

implement and/or enforce policies and procedures that may increase the proportionality of African American students in gifted programs. Of the ten survey items that assessed principals' knowledge of gifted standards, two were rated higher from participants: 1) The school ensures that high stakes tests have been validated for the purpose for which they are used and have been standardized on populations of students similar to their students and 2) Administration, teachers, and support personnel are knowledgeable about differences in cultural practices that might impact on student behavior. These practices suggests that knowledge into the arenas of testing and student behavior are deemed important and impactful on policies and procedures used to govern and enroll minority students into gifted programs.

This concept was discussed briefly in the demographic section of the questionnaire and displayed in Table 13. In this section, principal participants were asked to select and/or suggest actions that they could take as a building level leader to narrow the gap in proportionality of African American identification. The next section of Chapter V will discuss these suggestions at length for educational leaders. Additionally, the next section will explore how these strategies could impact the way in which giftedness is assessed from a culturally diverse lens.

Limitations of the Study

The most impactful limitation of the study was the methodology used to disperse invitations and reminders to possible participants. The current study submitted invitations and reminders to superintendents or their designee for dispersal to possible participants. This was done to assure and sustain participant privacy and confidentiality identified in the IRB application. These actions were taken for the purpose of denying the researcher access to participants' names, school affiliations, or contact information and thus, all responders could clearly remain anonymous throughout the research process from invitation through the

completion of the questionnaire. Unfortunately, this method removed the researcher from direct communication with possible participants, resulting in a small sample size. Additionally, the researcher had no control of how far in advanced participants received notifications and reminders. It was later discovered that some superintendents or designees never forwarded any of the reminders sent from the researcher. The omission of this notice is believed to directly impact questionnaire participations.

It is important to note, only school districts with at least a 25% African American student population were invited to participate. This resulted in only twenty school districts in central North Carolina that were eligible to participate in the study. Of the twenty eligible schools, a possible 387 elementary principals could have participated in the study. However, only ten school districts accepted the invitation to participate, resulting in only 60 elementary principals to participate in the questionnaire. From there, only 26 participants submitted the questionnaire. These cutoffs could have impacted the resulting sample size as well. The participant pool was also limited to elementary school principals in central North Carolina which excluded principals in higher grades and in other regions of the state.

Another limitation of the study was the amount of missing data throughout the questionnaire. The survey was not designed to prohibit participants from proceeding through the questions if they skipped the previous item. Consequently, ample amount of needed data were not provided. However, the questionnaire was designed this way to allow participants to voluntarily answer assessment items they were comfortable with and avoid items they were uncomfortable or lacked the knowledge needed to answer a particular item.

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

The following section delivers suggestions for application. In this section, suggestions are made for principals, gifted specialist, teachers, and school counselors due to their role in gifted identification and enrollment. The bulleted recommendations in this section only, are a compilation of strategies from Chamberlain, 2005; Bazron et. al., 2005; Reihl, 2000; Wooleyhand, 2013; and Leithwood & Reihl, 2003 as cited by Williams, 2014 in the survey tool used in the current study.

Implications for Principals

The statistically significant relationships identified in the study may assist educational leaders and researchers in a greater understanding of the influence that cultural responsiveness and the knowledge of state standards has on the proportionality of African American students in gifted education. According to this dataset, it is typical to see increases in student proportionality as the level of principal knowledge and support of CRT practices and AIG standards increase. The research also shows a strong positive relationship between CRT practices and AIG standards alone. This suggests that there are elements in both modalities that are fundamentally similar and relative to one another. With insight into these findings, school districts could invest in proper training of both gifted standards and cultural education training for administrators. This knowledge could empower administrators to identify best practices that would improve the abilities of teachers, counselors, and gifted specialist to promote and acknowledge giftedness in African American children in a variety of unconventional ways.

Recommendations for Principals

With an importance placed on this matter (and additional research) it is possible that school principals may find value in identifying, providing, and encouraging teacher level professional development that increases knowledge of culturally responsive teaching practices.

Consequently, this push towards increasing cultural awareness and education in teachers, counselors, and gifted specialist could (according to the study's results) lead to increased identification for African American students. Principals are encouraged to engage in one or many of the following strategies to provide adequate leadership in the area of gifted identification and proportionate enrollment for African American students (Williams, 2014). Continual implementation of these strategies may increase the proportionality in schools' AIG programs.

- Provide teachers with ongoing opportunities to collaboratively explore best practices in culturally responsive pedagogy
- Set high expectations for teachers and students and provide a scaffold of support
- Create and model environments that allow students and teachers to connect with one another, both in and out of the classroom
- Promote democratic discourse within the school community that addresses racism and discrimination
- Mold school cultures that embrace and support diversity
- Adopt a personalizing strategy for yourself as a leader that treats students as individuals rather than representatives of a social group
- Use data to ensure achievement for ALL students

Additionally, school principals are encouraged to include the recommended strategies into the School Improvement Plan. School Improvement Plans serve as a guideline and roadmap to improve student achievement and success over a designated period of time. In North Carolina (and conceivably other states), all public schools are mandated by state and federal law to submit a School Improvement Plan for review and approval to the state board of education (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, section 1101 et seq.; Article 8B School Based Management &

Accountability Program). It is recommended that the school improvement team evaluate gifted policies and procedures governing the school AIG recruitment and selection process. The team could then assist gifted specialist in ensuring practices that are culturally sound.

Above all, it would be the suggestion of this researcher that principals of all levels educate and familiarize themselves with culturally diverse research on giftedness and the disproportionality of African American student identification. By doing so, these administrators who are the catalysts of change could develop and execute responsive practices to combat this issue in their school building. While traditionally, principals are typically excluded from the gifted identification process, their values on the significance of proportionate enrollment in the gifted education program can influence the various personnel who manage the AIG program. It is the belief of this researcher that as awareness increases on the matter, the level of importance will shift and become a priority at the school level and hopefully extend to the district, state, and national levels as well. Accordingly, building level staff will place the importance on school issues of race, biasness, and equitable education access that are continuously discussed, addressed, and supported by building level administrators.

Implications for Gifted Specialist

Professionals in the role of a gifted specialist are in a position that enables them the opportunity to work as a middle tier of support for the teachers and counselors who perform and maintain the duties of gifted education and the administrators that oversee them. In this role, gifted specialist could look to the findings of this study as a model to investigate the proportionality statistics at his/her school(s). With that data, gifted specialist could assist in the proper training and supervision of gifted personnel. It is suggested that gifted specialist engage in the following strategies to increase awareness and training about gifted standards, culturally

responsive teaching practices, and the relationships these entities have on the overall proportionality of students in gifted education.

Recommendations for Gifted Specialist

It is recommended that gifted specialist perform the following tasks to aid in diversity training of gifted personnel and the delivery of multicultural services to students (Williams, 2014):

- Implement and support policies that view diversity as an asset
- Provide staff development on best practices for teaching students of color
- Encourage teachers to examine their practice for possible race, class, or gender bias
- Build connections between the school and the community
- Learn about the cultural norms and values of the community served

Implications for Teachers

Due to the findings of this study, teachers are encouraged to obtain training on culturally responsive teaching practices to incorporate in curriculum and instruction. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the state identified gifted standards that govern the AIG program. In addition, teachers must engage in reflection activities that will ensure a consciousness of diversity and cultural awareness. It is also important that teachers utilize supports from administrators, gifted specialist, and counselors to assist in building and maintaining a culturally diverse and respectful learning environment.

Recommendations for Teachers

Ultimately, by including CRT practices in the daily delivery of instructions, teachers may use the following strategies to increase their ability to facilitate and acknowledge giftedness in African American children. It is recommended that teachers (Williams, 2014):

- Resist pressure to “teach to the test”
- Give students direct instruction in the “hidden curriculum” of the school
- Promote inclusive forms of teaching and learning that enable students of color to succeed, i.e., learning preferences, proximity, walk & talk, etc.
- Work with parents or family members as partners in their student’s education
- Incorporate the cultural background of students into the curriculum and the school environment

Implications for School Counselors

School counselors assist students in the socioemotional learning that takes place at various developmental stages of childhood adolescence. In this role, school counselors can be used as a resource to help teachers, parents, and administrators in evaluating and navigating the gifted learning program. School counselors may assist in identifying areas of improvement in curriculum and instructional classroom practices as well as identification and enrollment procedures that influence African American placement in gifted education.

Recommendations for School Counselors

It is recommended that school counselors a) promote a culture of equity, fairness, and respect for students of color and their families in the school setting and use their skills to b) recognize interethnic conflict when it occurs and use it as an opportunity to make positive changes. By making these strategies a priority, school counselors can assist in making AIG programs more proportionate and accessible to African American students. Additionally, school counselors can assist minority parents in obtaining information about gifted services to educate and empower them to advocate for the recruitment and identification of their child (ren).

Together, principals, gifted specialist, teachers, and school counselors (along with parents) could use the suggested strategies to create an equity team whose sole purpose is to

learn, educate, and monitor culturally responsive teaching (CRT) practices in the gifted identification process. With the help of the suggestions identified, the equity team should select yearly goals and identify best practices to meet these goals in a school year. This team should receive on-going training on CRT and conduct schoolwide workshops to “teach the teacher(s)” what CRT strategies look like and how they can be implemented in the classroom to promote rigor and aid in identifying gifted among minority students.

Implications and Recommendations for Policy

Implications for Policy

As demonstrated in the literature review, the role of gifted policy is an initial step into the investigation of equitable gifted services available to minority groups. The use of culturally biased assessments have been acknowledged as a catalyst that restricts gifted identification to wealthy white children. In North Carolina the use and choice of standardized tests in gifted identification is at the complete discretion of each school district, creating significant variance in the identification criteria within the state. If this practice is common in other states, the amount of variance between one districts’ or states’ eligibility criteria in gifted education creates a lack of impartiality and continuity in the identification process. This issue must be addressed (at least within each state) to standardized identification criteria. It is typical in North Carolina that gifted testing is conducted for third-grade students and once identified, students are tracked in gifted education until graduation from high school. For these students, this is an advantage because regardless of their true academic performance or failure in later years, they will always be tracked in gifted education and ushered through the system regardless of their actual progress and scholastic abilities beyond third grade. For other students, this common practice excludes them from ever being identified as gifted if they missed the mark or were never tested in third

grade for the remainder of their K-12 educational experience. This is a disservice to minority students and low-income students who tend to not perform well on standardized tests due to culturally biased constructs within the tests. Above all, these types of practices must be addressed in policy reform nationally, and certainly in the state of North Carolina.

Recommendations for Policy

While 88.5% of states use standardized testing as the leading gifted identification tool; over 90% of school districts within states look to test results as indicators of giftedness (Ford et al., 2002). With such high reliability on standardized testing in the identification process, it is important that culturally sound policies are formed to standardized and equalize the identification process. It is the recommendation of this researcher that the following actions take place to ensure equitable access to gifted education for minority students on behalf of policy reform:

- The State Legislature should mandate the use of research-based, culturally responsive, non-verbal assessments in the identification of all gifted children
 - Districts must identify the tool used and provide recent research data to support the cutoffs acknowledged as the threshold for achieving a “gifted status” as appropriate cutoffs for minority students
 - If a district requires students to score in the 90-95th percentiles to achieve “gifted status”, the district must provide culturally relevant research that provides evidence that this cutoff and the assessment tool chosen are appropriate measures to indicate giftedness in the best interest of low-income, and minority children
 - Schools/districts must maintain and submit student performance data (categorized by race, gender, and income demographics) on the identified assessment as

evidence that disparate impact has not occurred due to the selection and use of the standardized assessment and cutoff criteria chosen

- School-wide screenings should be conducted at least two times per school year toward the end of each semester to capture transplant students
- School-wide screenings should take place at every educational level (elementary, middle, and high school) to capture students who may not have been identified through previous testing
 - Testing must be conducted routinely at the elementary and secondary levels
- In the mandated three year AIG plan, districts must identify and document school/district provided multicultural professional development that is mandated for all teaching staff and AIG personnel to be delivered quarterly
- The State Legislature should mandate the incorporation of a multi-tier identification process that diversifies the gifted criteria required for identification. These tiers should include all of the following as part of the recruitment, screening, and identification process:
 - Performance on assessments and work samples, educator recommendation (any school level personnel in curriculum, instruction, guidance, or administration are included), parent-guardian-community recommendation (eligibility criteria must include an outside recommendation)
 - School must maintain strict records that these items were included in the identification process and how these items resulted in the approval or denial of gifted identification

Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

Implications for Future Research

Further research should be conducted on this topic of gifted access to African American children and the relationships that exist between state standards, culturally responsive practices, and the proportionality of African American students. This study provided historical and current data that explained the disparity of educational equity for African Americans in the United States. The literature that influenced this study spoke heavily about the separate and unequal educational opportunities for minority students in the gifted arena. As a result, it is imperative that further research is conducted on this topic to continue the discussion of race and culture in gifted education. The findings of this study suggested that there are trends between culturally responsive teaching, state standards, and the existing proportionality of African Americans in gifted programs. In light of the limitations of this study, this researcher has identified suggestions to further researcher that can continue to add valuable data to this topic.

Recommendations for Future Research

Ultimately, it is recommended that the methodology used to duplicate this study be altered. The current study focused its efforts to the elementary level of education as it was the level in which gifted identification was identified. However, further research could be conducted at the middle and high school levels to investigate retention of African American students in gifted education after identification has taken place. Also, this study could be duplicated at the middle and high school levels to see if findings are similar in honors and AP classes which are advanced level courses that do not require students to be identified as gifted to enroll. Further insight into the culturally responsive teaching and proportionality in these secondary educational classes would aid in the investigation of longitudinal evidence beyond the elementary years

identified in the current study. Additionally, future research could include assistant principals and gifted specialist in the survey as administrators and/or teachers to evaluate actual CRT practices within instruction.

Undeniably, the results of the current study has alluded to an interesting relationship between culturally responsive teaching practices, gifted state standards, and the proportionality of African American students in gifted education. This work can be used as a starting point to encourage additional research in this field concerning the three variables investigated.

Ultimately, using a different methodology could increase participants and/or provide insight into additional information at other educational levels.

Closing Statement

This study investigated the relationships between principals' reported knowledge and/or support of the NC AIG standards, Cultural Responsive Teaching (CRT) practices, and the proportionality of gifted enrollment for African American students. Through the literature review, we learned that with cultural awareness and responsiveness, educated teachers were able to successfully identify students of color for gifted education placement. Conversely, the literature provided us with examples of educational programs that were not culturally sound and thus, displayed great amounts of disproportionality of identified African American students in gifted courses. Consequently, we examined the topic further through the lens of Disparate Impact theory. We turned to additional research to explore how gifted policies and procedures used in the gifted identification process such as teacher referral, testing, and requirements of student success in previous gifted courses could actually have a reverse effect and isolate African American students from being identified as gifted. Through these lens, an assessment tool was identified that would allow investigation into disproportionality of African American students in

North Carolina's gifted programs and the possible relationship between this variable, culturally responsive teaching practices, and the knowledge and support of state gifted standards. Overall, the results indicated a positive statistical significant relationship. Accordingly, strategies were recommended in the areas of practice, policy, and research to increase awareness and identify tactics to increase the proportionality of African Americans in gifted education.

APPENDIX A: NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL PRINCIPAL JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Description

“These job descriptions are one of several adopted by the State Board of Education between 1984 and 1987 and were designed to correspond with the evaluation instrument. Local school systems can and often do modify the job descriptions to meet their individual needs. Please contact the school system in which you are interested for a finalized job description.”

(<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/work4ncschools/employment/jobdescrip/principaljob.pdf>)

Principal

- Reports to Superintendent
- Supervises all school personnel, directly and/or indirectly
- Purpose: To serve as the chief administrator of a school in developing and implementing policies, programs, curriculum activities, and budgets in a manner that promotes the educational development of each student and the professional development of each staff member.
- General Planning: conceptualizes the broad goals of the school and plans accordingly to ensure that procedures and schedules are implemented to carry out the total school program.
- General Coordination: ensures that the school program is compatible with the legal, financial and organizational structure of the school system. The principal defines the responsibilities and accountability of staff members and develops plans for interpreting the school program to the community.
- Enhancement of Personnel Skills: provides activities which facilitate the professional growth of the school staff and enhance the quality of the instructional program.
- School Objectives: identifies the annual objectives for the instructional, extracurricular, and athletic programs of the school.

- Curriculum Objectives: ensures that instructional objectives for a given subject and/or classroom are developed, and involves the faculty and others in the development of specific curricular objectives to meet the needs of the school program. The principal provides opportunities for staff participation in the school program.
- Establishes Formal Work Relationships: evaluates student progress in the instructional program by means that include the maintaining of up-to-date student data. The principal supervises and appraises the performance of the school staff.
- Facilitates Organizational Efficiency: maintains inter-school system communication and seeks assistance from central office staff to improve performance. The principal maintains good relationships with students, staff, and parents. The principal complies with established lines of authority.
- New Staff and Students: orients and assists new staff and new students and provides opportunities for their input in the school program.
- Community: encourages the use of community resources, cooperates with the community in the use of school facilities, interprets the school program for the community, and maintains communication with community members.
- Supplies and Equipment: manages, directs, and maintains records on the materials, supplies and equipment which are necessary to carry out the daily school routine. The principal involves the staff in determining priorities for instructional purposes.
- Services: organizes, oversee, and provides support to the various services, supplies, material, and equipment provided to carry out the school program. The principal makes use of community resources.

APPENDIX B: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE LETTERS AND FOLLOW-UP LETTERS

Letter to Superintendent or Designee Requesting District Participation

Dear [TITLE, LAST NAME],

Your school district has been selected to participate in a regional research study entitled Elementary Principals' Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices and the Identification of Black Students in Gifted Education Programs. The goal of this survey is to understand elementary principals' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and how it relates to gifted identification for minority students at their school. As a doctoral candidate in the department of Educational Leadership at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), the participation of your school district is vital.

We only seek participation from elementary principals serving students in grades 3 through 5. This research study is conducted online through a brief 26 item survey and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. There are two parts to the survey. Part I of the survey collects school demographic data so that comparisons can be made. Part II of the survey consist of statements that participants will rate to describe the teaching, learning, classroom achievement, and behavior management in 3rd through 5th grade classes.

This study has been reviewed and exempted by the UNC Institutional Review Board (IRB). All information collected through this survey will be anonymous and no identifiable information of participants will be shared with anyone or reported at any time, including any identifiable information of the school district; such as the name or location. Therefore, there is no foreseeable harm or risk, either personally or professionally associated with the participation in the survey. Additionally, principal participation in this study is voluntary; and therefore, participants may withdrawal or decline to answer any survey item(s) at any time. The survey will be accessible for one week online using Qualtrics software under the supervision of UNC's Odum Institute of research.

The benefits in participating in this study is that it can be used to assess the current climate of gifted education identification for minority students in North Carolina school districts and assist in identifying areas of improvement and ways to increase minority presence at the elementary level. Please respond to this email "granting or denying approval for participation" of your elementary school principals in this survey. Upon your permission, further information will be sent to you or the designee you identify, detailing the distribution methods of the survey for principal access.

Thank you for your consideration to participate in this study and contribute to our knowledge base of this matter. Please direct any questions or concerns you may have to me, Katrina Massey Cruz (Principal Investigator) or Dr. Fenwick English (UNC Faculty Advisor).
Sincerely,

Katrina Massey Cruz, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate, UNC-Chapel Hill
masseyka@live.unc.edu

Fenwick English, Ph.D.
Faculty Advisor, UNC-Chapel Hill
fenglish@email.unc.edu

Invitation to Participate Letter

Greetings,

Your school district has been selected to participate in a regional research study entitled *Elementary Principals' Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices and the Identification of Black Students in Gifted Education Programs*. As a doctoral student in the department of Educational Leadership at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), your participation in this study is vital. You have been selected from a list of North Carolina public school administrators serving students in grade 3 through 5. The list was obtained through the Department of Public Instruction and/or through your school website. This research study is conducted online through a brief 25 item survey and should take approximately 15 minutes of your time.

Survey. The goal of this survey is to understand elementary principals' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and how it relates to gifted identification for minority students at their school. There are two parts to the survey. Part I of the survey collects school demographic data so that comparisons can be made. Part II of the survey consist of statements that participants will rate to describe the teaching, learning, classroom achievement, and behavior management in 3rd through 5th grade classes. The survey will be accessible for one week at the following link:

https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aV66lG3VoYB1v3n

Risk and Confidentiality. All information collected through this survey will be anonymous and no identifiable information of participants will be shared with anyone or reported at any time. Therefore, there is no foreseeable harm or risk, either personally or professionally associated with the participation in the survey. This study has been reviewed and exempted by the UNC Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Participation and Consent. Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants may withdrawal or decline to answer any survey item(s) at any time. Consent to participate in the research study is obtained through the completion of the survey.

Benefits. The survey tool used in this study can be used to assess the current climate of gifted education identification for minority students and assist in identifying areas of improvement and ways to increase minority presence.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. The information you provide will greatly improve our understanding of culturally responsive teaching and gifted identification from an administrative perspective. Please direct any questions or concerns you may have to Katrina Massey Cruz (Principal Investigator) or Dr. Fenwick English (Faculty Advisor).

Sincerely,
Katrina Massey Cruz, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate, UNC-Chapel Hill
masseyka@live.unc.edu

Fenwick English, Ph.D
Faculty Advisor, UNC-Chapel Hill
fenglish@email.unc.edu

Follow-up Letter

Greetings Principal [LAST NAME],

Recently, you received an invitation to complete a short 25 item survey for a regional research study. While this is an extremely busy time of year school principals, your input on this topic is important to improve educational equity for students and best practices for fellow administrators. It is not too late to complete the survey below it will take roughly 15 minutes to complete. Please access the survey at:

https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aV661G3VoYB1v3n

Remember, all information gathered through this survey is anonymous and no identifiable information will be shared regarding your participation at any time.

Thank you so much for your help and assistance.

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me, Katrina Massey Cruz, or my research advisor, Dr. Fenwick English.

Sincerely,

Katrina Massey Cruz, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate, UNC-Chapel Hill
masseyka@live.unc.edu

Fenwick English, Ph.D
Faculty Advisor, UNC-Chapel Hill
fenglish@email.unc.edu

Final Survey Reminder

Greetings Elementary Principals,

Your feedback on the Culturally Responsive Teaching survey is vital and valuable as it may assist with identifying teaching practices that could impact the identification of minority students in gifted education. The survey will take 15 minutes or less of your time and responses are completely anonymous. Please access the survey by clicking or copying and pasting the following link:

https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aV66lG3VoYB1v3n

Thank you for your time and commitment to student equity in education. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Katrina Massey Cruz at the contact information below.

Sincerely,

Katrina Massey Cruz, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate, UNC-Chapel Hill
masseyka@live.unc.edu

Fenwick English, Ph.D
Faculty Advisor, UNC-Chapel Hill
fenglish@email.unc.edu

APPENDIX C: SURVEY

Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching

Thank you for agreeing to take this survey. Like you, I am passionate about every child succeeding in our schools. The survey below will help to ensure our practice meets the needs of every child. The purpose of this survey is to understand elementary principals' perceptions of the level of culturally responsive practice in their schools according to how learning is organized. By taking this survey, you have the opportunity to reflect on the instructional practices at your school related to cultural responsiveness.

Culturally responsive teaching is defined as: ...using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them.

- *It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum.*
- *It uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles.*
- *It incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools. (Gay, 2010, pp. 31-32)*

Part I of the survey consists of simple collection of demographic data to aid the researcher in making comparisons. Part II consists of statements that describe teaching and learning, classroom achievement and assessment, and behavior management.

The survey used in this study will ask you to select a response that best reflects your perspective or current situation as it relates to cultural responsiveness. There are no right or wrong answers. Please mark the response that best reflects your perspective or current situation. The entire survey will take approximately 15 minutes.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you can exit the survey at any time or decline to answer any survey item for any reason. The information you provide will be anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your information, and at no time will your responses be linked with any identifying information. There are no foreseeable personal or professional risks associated with completing this survey.

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey. The information you provide will significantly enhance our understanding of principals and assistant principal's perceptions of cultural responsiveness in their schools.

Part I. Demographics

Please mark the answer that *BEST* reflects your demographic and the demographic of your school. You may want to use the CMS Principal Portal and access the "Current Enrollment by School Report" to provide the enrollment and demographic school information.

1. How many students are enrolled in your current school? _____
2. At your current school, what is the number of the total student population of each group listed below?

American Indian _____
Asian or Asian American _____
African American or African American _____
Hispanic or Latino/a _____
Multi-Racial _____
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian _____
White _____

3. What percentage of students receive free or reduced price lunch? _____
4. At your current school, what is the number of the total student population enrolled in the Academically Intelligent and Gifted program of each group listed below?

American Indian _____
Asian or Asian American _____
African American or African American _____
Hispanic or Latino/a _____
Multi-Racial _____
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian _____
White _____

5. With which race(s) and gender do you identify? Choose all that apply.

American Indian
Asian or Asian American
African American or African American
Hispanic or Latino/a
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
White
Male
Female

6. Are you knowledgeable of the North Carolina AIG Standards? _____ Yes _____ No
7. Do you routinely support/encourage teachers and AIG staff to adhere/comply with North Carolina AIG Standards? _____ Yes _____ No
8. Are you knowledgeable of culturally responsive teaching practices? _____ Yes _____ No
9. Do you routinely support/encourage teachers and other AIG staff to incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices in curriculum and instruction? _____ Yes _____ No
10. At your current school, do you believe that the enrollment of students in the AIG program is culturally proportionate to that of the total student population in your school?
_____ Yes _____ No

(Skip questions 11 and 12 if your answer to question 10 was "Yes.")

11. If your answer to question 10 was “No,” do you believe that you, as a building leader, can make a difference in narrowing the proportionality gap in AIG enrollment at your school?

_____Yes _____No

Why or why not?

(Skip question 12 if your answer to question 10 was “Yes.”)

12. If your answer to question 10 was “No,” how do you intend to make a difference in narrowing the proportionality gap in AIG enrollment at your school? Select all the strategies from the list below that you are using or plan to use in the next 2 years to do so.

- Implement and support policies that view diversity as an asset
- Provide staff development on best practices for teaching students of color
- Provide teachers with ongoing opportunities to collaboratively explore best practices in culturally responsive pedagogy
- Resist pressure to “teach to the test”
- Set high expectations for teachers and students and provide a scaffold of support
- Give students direct instruction in the “hidden curriculum” of the school
- Create and model environments that allow students and teachers to connect with one another, both in and out of the classroom
- Promote democratic discourse within the school community that addresses racism and discrimination
- Promote inclusive forms of teaching and learning that enable students of color to succeed, i.e., learning preferences, proximity, walk & talk, etc.
- Mold school cultures that embrace and support diversity
- Adopt a personalizing strategy for yourself as a leader that treats students as individuals rather than representatives of a social group
- Recognize interethnic conflict when it occurs and use it as an opportunity to make positive changes
- Encourage teachers to examine their practice for possible race, class, or gender bias
- Build connections between the school and the community
- Work with parents or family members as partners in their student’s education
- Use data to ensure achievement for ALL students
- Incorporate the cultural background of students into the curriculum and the school environment
- Learn about the cultural norms and values of the community served
- Promote a culture of equity, fairness, and respect for students of color and their families
- Other? Please list any additional strategies here:

Part II. Organization of Learning

Please mark the answer that BEST represents its occurrence at your school.

Almost Always = occurs more than 75% of the time

Frequently = occurs 50 to 75% of the time

Sometimes = occurs 26 to 49% of the time

Almost Never = occurs 25% or less of the time

Not Applicable = does not apply to your school

A. Teaching and Learning

The following survey items are about teaching and learning. They ask you to indicate how frequently each occurs at your school. There is a 4-point response scale, in addition to not applicable. Please choose the answer that best reflects what happens at your school.

	Indicators of Cultural Responsive Teaching	Almost Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Almost Never	Not Applicable
1.	Teachers are knowledgeable about the second language acquisition process and how to support students who are English language learners.					
2.	Teachers modify their instruction so that students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and ability groups will have an equal opportunity to learn.					
3.	Teachers inform students about and give them tools to disrupt stereotyping and other related biases that have negative effects on racial and ethnic relations.					
4.	Teachers have high expectations for all students to reach their highest potential, regardless of their background or differences.					
5.	Teachers work from the premise that “all children can learn” and continue to attempt different instructional approaches until each child is reached.					
6.	Teachers feel a strong sense of responsibility for all students, including students referred for or already placed in special education.					
7.	Teachers are experts in instruction and management and know how to effectively challenge and support their students in culturally sensitive ways.					
8.	Teachers are knowledgeable about and skilled in using strategies for teaching English language learners (including sheltered English techniques).					

B. Classroom Achievement and Assessment

The following survey items are about classroom achievement and assessment. They ask you to indicate how frequently each occurs at your school. There is a 4-point response scale, in addition to not applicable. Please choose the answer that best reflects what happens at your school.

	Indicators of Cultural Responsive Teaching	Almost Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Almost Never	Not Applicable
1.	Classroom assessment is conducted with fairness and sensitivity towards students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.					
2.	Teachers use a range of assessment strategies that provide students from diverse backgrounds opportunities to demonstrate their mastery and skills, including the opportunity to share what they know in their native language if they wish.					
3.	Administrators and teachers use a variety of instruments and strategies to assist students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups in meeting State standards and other mandated requirements (e.g., No Child Left Behind Act).					
4.	Teachers utilize information from several sources, including families, in assessing students' achievement.					
5.	The school identifies and uses multiple assessment tools and strategies that are research-based and culturally valid.					
6.	The school provides school and districtwide training in the administration of assessment tools and methods (i.e., standardized tests, oral presentations, projects, group work, allowing students to work at school, etc.) that consider the student's cultural background.					
7.	The school knows when and how to provide accommodations to students with special needs and English language learners.					
8.	The school ensures that high stakes tests have been validated for the purpose for which they are used and have been standardized on populations of students similar to their students.					

C. Behavior Management

The following survey items are about classroom management. They ask you to indicate how frequently each occurs at your school. There is a 4-point response scale, in addition to not applicable. Please choose the answer that best reflects what happens at your school.

	Indicators of Cultural Responsive Teaching	Almost Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Almost Never	Not Applicable
1.	Administration, teachers, and support personnel are knowledgeable about differences in cultural practices that might impact on student behavior.					
2.	Teachers are knowledgeable about certain behaviors that are consistent with students' cultural background so as not to consider them deviant.					

(Adapted from a Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching created by Williams, K. (2014). Elementary principals' and assistant principals' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices in North Carolina (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.)

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION TO USE ASSESSMENT LETTER
Permission to use Survey Letter

Dear Dr. Kebbler Williams,

This letter is to request your assistance in a future research study. As a doctoral student in the department of Educational Leadership at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), my research focus is on gifted education and equitable access for minority students. In particular, my interest is in the identification and proportionality of African American students in gifted and talented programs.

My research study is entitled *Elementary Principals' Perceptions of Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices and the Identification of African American Students in Gifted Education Programs*. I am seeking your permission to use your Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching to assess the perceptions of North Carolina principals on the matter of gifted identification and African American students through the lens of culturally responsive teaching practices. The survey will not be used in its entirety. However, several relative items will be selected and used in the future study through an adaptive survey of 25 items that are relational to the North Carolina AIG (Academically and Intellectually Gifted) Standards.

The goal of the adaptive survey is to understand elementary principals' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching practices and how it relates to gifted identification for minority students at their school. As in your survey, there will be two parts to the survey. Part I of the survey collects school demographic data so that comparisons can be made. Part II of the survey will consist of statements that participants will rate to describe the teaching, learning, classroom achievement, and behavior management (as in your survey) in 3rd through 5th grade classes. The survey will be accessible for one week and disseminated to participating principals through an online link.

Through the strict guidance of the UNC Institutional Review Board (IRB), all information collected through the adaptive survey will be anonymous, kept confidential at all times, without ever sharing identifiable information of participants at any time. Therefore, there is no foreseeable harm or risk, either personally or professionally associated with the participation in the adaptive survey.

With your permission to use the Survey for Culturally Responsive Teaching, the study can help local school districts assess the current climate of gifted education identification for minority students and assist in identifying areas of improvement and ways to increase minority presence. With your help, the information obtained from the use of this survey can improve our understanding of culturally responsive teaching and gifted identification from an administrative perspective. In advance, I thank you for your time and assistance. Please direct any concerns to me, Katrina Massey Cruz (Principal Investigator) or Dr. Fenwick English (Faculty Advisor).

Sincerely,
Katrina Massey Cruz, Ed.S.
Doctoral Candidate, UNC-Chapel Hill
masseyka@live.unc.edu

Fenwick English, Ph.D.
Faculty Advisor, UNC-Chapel Hill
fenglish@email.unc.edu

APPENDIX E: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND NC STANDARDS FREQUENCY TABLES

Part II. Organization of Learning (Survey of Culturally Responsive Practice)

A. Teaching and Learning

1. Teachers understand the ways in which race, ethnicity, culture, language and social class interact to influence student behavior
2. Teachers are knowledgeable about the history and cultures of diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups
3. Teachers are knowledgeable about individual learning preferences
4. Teachers are knowledgeable about the second language acquisition process and how to support students who are English language learners
5. Teachers modify their instruction so that students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and ability groups will have an equal opportunity to learn
6. Teachers relate content and instructional strategies to the cultural background of their students
7. Teachers utilize instructional materials that reflect images and perspectives from diverse groups
8. Teachers help students to appreciate current and historical events from multiple perspectives
9. Teachers help to organize activities and projects that enable students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups to work together in the classroom
10. Teachers inform students about and give them tools to disrupt stereotyping and other related biases that have negative effects on racial and ethnic relations
11. Teachers have high expectations for all students to reach their highest potential, regardless of their background or differences
12. Teachers work from the premise that “all children can learn” and continue to attempt different instructional approaches until each child is reached
13. Teachers feel a strong sense of responsibility for all students, including students referred for or already placed in special education
14. Teachers are experts in instruction and management and know how to effectively challenge and support their students in culturally sensitive ways
15. Teachers are knowledgeable about and skilled in using strategies for teaching English language learners (including sheltered English techniques)

B. Classroom Achievement and Assessment

1. Classroom assessment is conducted with fairness and sensitivity towards students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
2. Teachers use a range of assessment strategies that provide students from diverse backgrounds opportunities to demonstrate their mastery and skills, including the opportunity to share what they know in their native language if they wish
3. Administrators and teachers use a variety of instruments and strategies to assist students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups in meeting State standards and other mandated requirements (e.g., No Child Left Behind Act)
4. Teachers utilize information from several sources, including families, in assessing students' achievement
5. The school identifies and uses multiple assessment tools and strategies that are research-based and culturally valid
6. The school provides school and district-wide training in the administration of assessment tools and methods (i.e., standardized tests, oral presentations, projects, group work, allowing students to work at school, etc.) that consider the student's cultural background
7. The school knows when and how to provide accommodations to students with special needs and English language learners
8. The school ensures that high stakes tests have been validated for the purpose for which they are used and have been standardized on populations of students similar to their students

C. Behavior Management

1. Administration, teachers, and support personnel are knowledgeable about differences in cultural practices that might impact on student behavior
2. Administration, teachers, and support personnel discipline students with a sensitivity towards students' cultural and linguistic differences
3. Classroom rules and procedures are written and explained in language that is clear to students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
4. Teachers are knowledgeable about certain behaviors that are consistent with students' cultural background so as not to consider them deviant
5. Teachers utilize resource persons belonging to or familiar with a student's cultural and linguistic background to assist in planning behavioral interventions
6. Students are taught school-sanctioned behaviors, particularly as they might conflict with culturally specific behavior

7. Students are made aware of behaviors that might be culturally specific so they can learn how to interact appropriately with students from cultures other than their own

Standard 1: Student Identification: The LEA’s student identification procedures for AIG are clear, equitable, and comprehensive and lead towards appropriate educational services.

- a) Articulates and disseminates the procedures for AIG student identification, including screening, referral, and identification processes for all grade levels to school personnel, parents/families, students, and the community-at-large.
- b) Employs multiple criteria for AIG student identification, including measures that reveal student aptitude, student achievement, or potential to achieve in order to develop a comprehensive profile for each student. These measures include both non-traditional and traditional standardized measures that are based on current theory and research.
- c) Ensures AIG screening, referral, and identification procedures respond to traditionally under-represented populations of the gifted and are responsive to LEA demographics. These populations include students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.
- d) Ensures consistency in implementation of screening, referral, and identification processes within the LEA.
- e) Establishes written policies that safeguard the rights of AIG students and their parents/families, including informed consent regarding identification and placement, reassessment procedures, transfers from other LEAs, and procedures for resolving disagreements.
- f) Maintains documentation that explains the identification process and service options for individual AIG students, which is reviewed annually with parents/families.

Table 17

Frequency Distribution of CRT items related to NC AIG Standard 1

CRT #	S1/A	S1/B	S1/C	S1/D	S1/E	S1/F	
a1			X				1
a2			X				1
a3		X	X	X			3
a4		X	X	X		X	4
a5		X	X	X	X	X	5
a6		X	X				2
a7			X				1
a8							
a9		X	X				2
a10	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
a11	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
a12	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
a13	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
a14	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
a15			X		X		2
b1	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
b2	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
b3	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
b4	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
b5	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
b6	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
b7	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
b8		X	X	X	X		4
c1	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
c2							
c3							
c4	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
c5							
c6							
c7							
TOTALS:	14	20	24	18	17	16	TOTALS:
							109/174=
							62.6%

Note. The above table indicates the relationship between items listed on the Culturally Responsive Teaching Survey and items identified in the North Carolina Academically Intelligent or Gifted Standards

Standard 2: Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction: The LEA employs challenging, rigorous, and relevant curriculum and instruction K-12 to accommodate a range of academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

a) Adapts the NC Standard Course of Study (SCOS) K-12, to address a range of advanced ability levels in language arts, mathematics, and other content areas as appropriate through the use of differentiation strategies, including enrichment, extension, and acceleration.

b) Employs diverse and effective instructional practices according to students' identified abilities, readiness, interests, and learning profiles, to address a range of learning needs at all grade levels.

c) Selects and uses a variety of research-based supplemental resources that augment curriculum and instruction.

d) Fosters the development of 21st century content and skills by infusing the following at an advanced level:

- High-level content for global awareness, civic and economic literacies, and health awareness
- Critical thinking and problem solving,
- High-level communication and collaboration,
- applied information and media literacy, including concepts, systems, and operations in challenging research contexts
- Creativity and innovation,
- Real-world learning in local, regional, and global contexts, and
- applied life skills for leadership, ethics, accountability, adaptability, productivity, responsibility, people skills, self-direction, and social responsibility.

e) Uses on-going assessment to differentiate classroom curriculum and instruction.

f) Creates affective curricular and instructional practices which support the social and emotional needs of AIG students.

g) Cultivates and develops the potential of young (K-3) students through purposeful and intentional strategies and differentiated curriculum and instruction.

h) Ensures collaboration among AIG personnel and other professional staff, including exceptional children's personnel and others related to AIG students, to develop and implement differentiated curriculum and instruction.

i) Develops and documents a student plan that articulates the differentiated curriculum and instruction services that match the identified needs of the K-12 AIG student, such as a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). This document is reviewed annually with parents/families to ensure effective programming, a continuum of services, and support school transitions.

Table 18

Frequency Distribution of CRT items related to NC AIG Standard 2

CRT #	S2/A	S2/B	S2/C	S2/D	S2/E	S2/F	S2/G	S2/H	S2/I	
a1						X				1
a2				X						1
a3		X			X	X				3
a4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		8
a5	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		8
a6	X			X		X				3
a7		X	X	X		X	X	X		6
a8			X	X	X	X	X			5
a9		X	X	X	X	X	X			6
a10	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		7
a11	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
a12	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
a13		X	X		X	X		X		5
a14	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
a15		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		7
b1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
b2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
b3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
b4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
b5	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
b6	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
b7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
b8	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
c1		X			X	X	X	X		5
c2		X			X	X	X	X		5
c3		X				X	X			3
c4		X			X	X	X			4
c5					X	X	X	X		4
c6				X		X	X			3
c7				X		X	X			3
TOTALS:	15	23	18	22	23	29	25	20	11	TOTALS:
186/270=										186/270=
68.9%										68.9%

Standard 6: Program Accountability: The LEA implements, monitors, and evaluates the local AIG program and plan to ensure that all programs and services are effective in meeting the academic, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.

- a) Develops a written AIG plan describing the local AIG program in accordance with state legislation and SBE policy, which has been approved by the LEA's school board and sent to SBE/DPI for review and comment.
- b) Monitors the implementation of the local AIG program and plan in accordance with current legislation and state policies to ensure fidelity of implementation for all AIG program components.
- c) Uses and monitors state funds allotted for the local AIG program according to state policy.
- d) Maintains, analyzes, and shares student performance growth and annual drop-out data for AIG students.
- e) Monitors the representation and retention of under-represented populations in the local AIG program, including students who are culturally/ ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, highly gifted, and twice-exceptional.
- f) Maintains current data regarding the credentials of personnel serving AIG students.
- g) Forms an advisory group of community members, parents/families of AIG students' representative of diverse populations in the program, teachers of the gifted, and other professional staff who meet regularly to review all aspects of the local AIG program and make recommendations for program improvement.
- h) Elicits regular feedback from students, parents/ families, teachers, and other stakeholders regarding the quality and effectiveness of the local AIG program.
- i) Reviews and revises the local AIG program and plan based on multiple sources of data for continuous program improvement.
- j) Disseminates all data from evaluation of the local AIG program to the public.
- k) Protects the rights of all AIG students through policies, procedures, and practices.

Table 19

Frequency Distribution of CRT items related to NC AIG Standard 6

CRT #	S6/A	S6/B	S6/C	S6/D	S6/E	S6/F	S6/G	S6/H	S6/I	S6/J	S6/K		
a1					X							1	
a2					X							1	
a3								X				1	
a4		X			X		X	X	X		X	6	
a5	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	8	
a6					X							1	
a7					X			X	X			3	
a8								X			X	2	
a9					X			X			X	3	
a10		X		X	X			X	X	X	X	7	
a11	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	11	
a12	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	11	
a13		X	X		X		X	X	X		X	7	
a14					X		X	X	X		X	5	
a15				X	X		X	X				4	
b1		X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	8	
b2				X	X			X	X	X	X	6	
b3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	11	
b4				X	X		X	X	X			5	
b5	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	7	
b6	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	11	
b7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	11	
b8				X	X				X	X	X	5	
c1					X	X	X	X			X	5	
c2											X	1	
c3											X	1	
c4					X						X	2	
c5					X		X	X			X	4	
c6					X						X	2	
c7					X						X	2	
TOTAL	45.5%	7	11	6	12	26	6	15	21	14	9	23	46.1%

APPENDIX F: TABLES

Table 20
Principals' Report of NC AIG standards and Culturally Responsive Teaching Knowledge

Statement	Frequency (%)		
	Yes	No	Total
Are you knowledgeable of the North Carolina AIG standards?	21 (87.5%)	3 (12.5%)	24 (100%)
Do you routinely support/encourage teachers and AIG staff to adhere/comply with North Carolina AIG standards?	24 (96%)	1(4%)	25 (100%)
Are you knowledgeable of culturally responsive teaching practices?	25 (100%)	0	25 (100%)
Do you routinely support/encourage teachers and other AIG staff to incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices in curriculum and instruction?	21 (95.5%)	1 (4.5%)	22 (100%)
At your current school, do you believe that the enrollment of students in the AIG program is culturally proportionate to that of the total student population in your school?	8 (36.4%)	14 (63.6%)	22 (100%)
Do you believe that you, as a building leader, can make a difference in narrowing the proportionality gap in AIG enrollment at your school?	18 (81.8%)	4 (18.2%)	22 (100%)

Note. Frequencies do not total 26 (i.e., the total number of participants) due to missing values.

Table 21

Why or Why Not? (n=13)

Participants Written Responses
A leader sets the tone for high expectations for all students regardless of any classifications.
Because I give my input in initial meetings for AIG student identification.
Devise a plan to target and service students that exhibit AIG characteristics at an early age.
Encourage teachers to look at the African American males as gifted and not just behavior problems.
I will make this difference by showing my teachers the data to prove that it is disproportionate.
Making sure that we are looking at the gifts of the whole child and not just test scores.
Most of our higher ranking students leave our school in 3rd grade to attend charter schools.
My goal is to ensure that all students are educated equitably.
My job is to help all students grow regardless of their gender, race or sex.
Teachers need more knowledge of what characteristics to look for in trying to identify students to be tested for the AIG program.
The district has defined the process for student enrollment in AIG.
The test results determine AIG placement.
Why not - guidelines/procedures are set so that only a couple of ethnic and racial students will receive services.

Note. Frequencies do not add to 26 (total number of participants) due to missing values.

Table 22

Culturally Responsive Strategies Indicated by Principals to Narrow the Proportionality Gap in AIG Enrollment Over the Next 2 Years (N=26)

Strategy	Frequency	Percent
Implement and support policies that view diversity as an asset	12	46.2
Provide staff development on best practices for teaching students of color	15	57.7
Provide teachers with ongoing opportunities to collaboratively explore best practices in culturally responsive pedagogy	11	42.3
Resist pressure to “teach to the test”	8	30.8
Set high expectations for teachers and students and provide a scaffold of support	21	80.8
Give students direct instruction in the “hidden curriculum” of the school	7	26.9
Create and model environments that allow students and teachers to connect with one another, both in and out of the classroom	11	42.3
Promote democratic discourse within the school community that addresses racism and discrimination	7	26.9
Promote inclusive forms of teaching and learning that enable students of color to succeed, i.e., learning preferences, proximity, walk & talk, etc.	14	53.8
Mold school cultures that embrace and support diversity	19	73.1
Adopt a personalizing strategy for yourself as a leader that treats students as individuals rather than representatives of a social group	11	42.3
Recognize interethnic conflict when it occurs and use it as an opportunity to make positive changes	8	30.8
Encourage teachers to examine their practice for possible race, class, or gender bias	17	65.4
Build connections between the school and the community	19	73.1
Work with parents or family members as partners in their student’s education	20	76.9
Use data to ensure achievement for ALL students	22	84.6
Incorporate the cultural background of students into the curriculum and the school environment	9	34.6
Learn about the cultural norms and values of the community served	12	46.2
Promote a culture of equity, fairness, and respect for students of color and their families	19	73.1

Note. The ‘frequency’ indicated in this table represents the number of participants that selected the indicated strategy as an approach that s/he plans to use within the next two years to narrow the proportionality gap in AIG enrollment at his/her school.

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