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Parent, teacher, and peer expectations: How they are perceived by academically gifted preadolescent males and females

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Parent, teacher, and peer expectations: How they are perceived by academically gifted preadolescent males and females

Abstract

This study examined the perceptions of a group of preadolescent males and females who were enrolled in academic replacement programs. The targeted issues were the expectations of parents, teachers, and peers as they related to the students' giftedness. Data were collected using a questionnaire and results were compared by gender. Both males and females expressed that parents, teachers, and peers outside the classroom held exaggerated expectations. Males, much more than females, perceived inflated expectations from parents. The impact of these findings on gifted programming is discussed and recommendations are made for further research and for the continued development of comprehensive approaches to gifted education.

**Parent, Teacher, and Peer Expectations: How They Are Perceived
by Academically Gifted Preadolescent Males and Females**

A Graduate Research Paper

**Submitted to the
Division of Education for the Gifted
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education
University of Northern Iowa**

**Bobbe Sutton
August 1, 1995**

This Research Paper by: Bobbe Sutton

Titled: Parent, Teacher, and Peer Expectations: How They Are Perceived by Academically Gifted Preadolescent Males and Females

has been approved as meeting the research paper requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

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Abstract:

This study examined the perceptions of a group of preadolescent males and females who were enrolled in academic replacement programs. The targeted issues were the expectations of parents, teachers, and peers as they related to the students' giftedness. Data were collected using a questionnaire and results were compared by gender. Both males and females expressed that parents, teachers, and peers outside the classroom held exaggerated expectations. Males, much more than females, perceived inflated expectations from parents. The impact of these findings on gifted programming is discussed and recommendations are made for further research and for the continued development of comprehensive approaches to gifted education.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

"Oft expectation fails, and most oft there/where most it promises."

Wm. Shakespeare

Joe, a student in the Challenge Center, stood in the doorway of the classroom two days before school was to start. It was immediately apparent that he had a specific purpose in mind. He stated clearly and convincingly his rationale for leaving the academic replacement program in which he had been a productive member for four years. He said that, although special programming had met his academic needs in areas for which he was identified, his school experience outside the Challenge Center was plagued by what he felt were unrealistic expectations. In his own words, "I'm tired of the pressure. I don't want to be perfect; I just want to be a normal kid."

Statement of the Problem

Gifted programming is an attempt to meet the needs of the students whose needs are not met within the confines of general education. For Joe, special programming was provided for his academic needs, but with special programming came unacceptable baggage. It was Joe's perception that the price for accepting appropriate programming was too high. It also was his perception that the expectations of his parents, teachers, and peers were exaggerated and unfair and that this was directly related to his placement in an academic program tailored to meet his needs.

Is Joe an isolated case? Do most students who are gifted and receiving special services feel burdened by what they perceive as unrealistic or inflated expectations by parents, teachers, and peers? Is there a difference in the way expectations are perceived by preadolescent males and females? These important questions need to be addressed as a part of research on the gifted and talented.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether preadolescent males who are identified as academically gifted tend to perceive the expectations of teachers, parents, and peers to be greater than do preadolescent gifted girls. The general intent was to add to the existing body of research on expectations. Specifically, the intent was to gain knowledge of and insight into perceptions held by males and females currently identified as gifted and receiving services in one of the four Challenge Centers in the Council Bluffs Community School District. The purpose was to use this information to continue the development of a comprehensive curriculum to meet the individual needs of these academically gifted students.

Definition of Terms

Challenge Centers

The Challenge Centers are academic replacement programs for elementary students who demonstrate a need for programming that is qualitatively different from the general curriculum in the Council Bluffs School District. These students spend an average

of 2 1/2 hours per day in the center for math and language arts instruction.

Curriculum Compacting

This is a three phase instructional technique supported by the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (Reis & Renzulli, 1992). The first phase is defining outcomes. The second phase involves pretesting, appropriate prescriptive exercises, and assessing for mastery. Phase three is providing enriching replacement activities for time earned.

Giftedness

For the purposes of this study the writer is using the definition of giftedness as stated in the Challenge Center guidelines:

- two scores above 135 on standardized ability tests and/or an average of 96% or higher on some norm-referenced test in selected academic areas
- evidence of task commitment in academic areas (demonstrated by evidence of the students ability to work independently)
- evidence of creative production (teacher reports and samples of student responses)

Expectations

Expectations of parents, teachers, and peers are defined in this paper as high expectations by the responses of "strongly agree" or "agree" on the Likert-type Attitude Scale. Low

expectations are defined by the responses of "strongly disagree" or "disagree" on the same scale.

Perceptions

Student perceptions also are defined in this paper by responses to the Likert-type Attitude Scale. "Strongly agree" and "agree" indicate that the student believes that the expectations of parents, teachers, and peers are high expectations. "Strongly disagree" and "disagree" indicate that the student believes that the expectations of parents, teachers, and peers are low expectations.

Limitations of the Study

An Eric Search was conducted at the University of Nebraska at Omaha's library. The key words *gifted*, *expectations*, *gender*, and *perceptions* were used. A hand search of current periodicals was also conducted. The studies on the topic of expectations were extensive. I focused on articles that dealt directly with issues relevant to giftedness. There was limited research under expectation, gender, and perception as related to giftedness.

A second limitation was the population. All subjects surveyed were participants in gifted programs in a midwestern urban school district. The students were predominantly Caucasian and middle class. Very few students from minority populations were a part of these Challenge Centers at the time of the survey.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Expectations Related to Gifted Programming

The study of parent and teacher expectancy effects on children's learning is not a new pursuit. It first gained attention in 1968 when Rosenthal and Jacobson's controversial study, Pygmalion in the Classroom: Teacher Expectation and Pupils' Intellectual Development was published in the popular press. The study of expectations as they relate to student development continues to be a volatile pursuit. Dusek, Hall, and Meyers (1985) claimed that somewhere between 300-400 papers had been published at that time, each examining teacher expectancy and teacher-expectancy effects.

A more recent study (Hershey & Oliver, 1988) reopened the issue of parent and teacher expectancy as it relates to gifted education. Hershey and Oliver surveyed 600 students in 32 school districts in Kansas, a return representing 75% of the identified population in those districts. When they asked respondents what problems, if any, students had encountered as a result of being identified as gifted, 45% responded that parents expect more, and 47% responded that teachers expect more. Eighteen percent felt that peers treat them differently because of their placement in gifted programming.

Students' perceptions of expectations of parents, teachers, and peers also were addressed in a study by Ford (1989). The article describes the student perceptions of fifth and sixth grade

students enrolled in resource programs for gifted and talented youngsters. A variety of issues are identified by the students as having great significance for social emotional development. The impact of affective stresses upon school performance is discussed. Recommendations are presented for parents, teachers, and students. Students in this study reported having to live up to the expectations of relatives and having to perform for the honor of the school. They also expressed annoyance at the expectation of perfection and felt the need not only to be good students but to perform well in sports. Finally, a majority of the students in this study reported that they experience ridicule from others when all-around performance was not superior.

According to some researchers, a common self-perception of gifted children is that they must perform at optimum levels in all areas to be acceptable, worthwhile people. McMann and Oliver (1988) found that in regard to the perceptions of others, gifted youth hear and must contend with double messages in the larger social sphere. On one hand, there are messages of applause, reward, and admiration; on the other hand, there are messages tinged with jealousy, envy, and resentment.

Roedel (1984) pointed out that the perfectionism of gifted children is frequently exaggerated by adults who constantly urge them to live up to their potential. He stated that a multitalented child may well have the ability to excel at high levels in every subject area, but realities of time and the dictates of the child's own interests make living up to his or her potential in every area an impossibility.

Comments compiled from a study of a sixth grade gifted class comparing gifted programming with general education classrooms in a university town middle school (Clinkenbeard, 1991) showed that these students perceived that the major differences relate to expectations:

This group of students perceived that regular classroom teachers and peers have unfair expectations for gifted students. The gifted students felt that other students expect the gifted to do all the work in group work situations; that regular teachers expect consistently high grades and, to some extent, model behavior; that teachers and peers do not acknowledge the successes of gifted students, seeming to assume effort was not involved; that regular teachers grade gifted students harder; and that age peers are sometimes jealous or insulting. (p. 61)

James Alvino (1991) discussed peer pressure as a primary deterrent to gifted programming. He cited a national study of school districts with gifted programs (Read, 1988) in which gifted students stated that peer pressure was most frequently given as the main discourager to participating in a gifted program.

Jane Wolfe (1991) put forth the idea that children believe what their parents tell them and try to meet parental expectations. She cited a study by Phillips (1982) that found that third grade children believe they have the abilities they hear their parents report, regardless of the grades they have actually achieved in class. For the most part, teachers reinforce the expectations the parents have begun. Wolfe went on to say that teachers expect gifted children to have social skills equal to or greater than non-gifted children. She reported that teachers

choose characteristics that demonstrate more socially accepted traits as evidence of giftedness, even when achievement scores indicate differently.

Carter and Kuechenmeister (1986) conducted a survey of classroom teachers which indicated that exaggerated expectations by teachers, peers, and parents are one consequence of participating in a pullout program. The issue of expectations was addressed directly, and the results of the study supported the concept of exaggerated expectations. Sixty-five percent of the classroom teachers surveyed said they evaluate students against higher standards than regular classroom students. Seventy-six percent of classroom teachers and 51% of parents surveyed believed that non-gifted students tend to have higher expectations of gifted students. Parents, teachers, and peers believed gifted students are expected to understand missed classwork more often than regular classroom students.

Meyers (1984) brought to light specific concerns of classroom teachers regarding a resource room program for the gifted. Concerns of teachers in this article were lack of ownership, lack of communication, scheduling, and student performance. Meyers felt that concerns may have some impact on the way teachers perceive gifted students and on the development of expectations of these students.

Expectations Related to Gender

Discussions of expectations often overlook gender differences. The literature indicates a consensus that exaggerated expectations on the part of parents, teachers, and

peers are factors in gifted programming (Carter & Kuechenmeister, 1986). It also points to a belief that gender is fundamental in understanding the impact of giftedness on children (Dorhout, 1993; Jay & Loeb, 1987). However, there are few studies that address the two issues as they interrelate. A three-year research project (Gagné, 1993) concluded that boys and girls are perceived differently in terms of aptitudes and abilities by peers and teachers. Yet much of the available research treats gifted students as a homogeneous group rather than two separate (but related) groups--gifted boys and gifted girls (Luftig & Nichols, 1991).

Wolfe (1991) addressed the issues of expectations and gender as she explored the social development of preadolescent gifted males. She concluded that maleness itself may be a factor that should be considered if academic programming puts social development at risk. Wolfe went on to say that boys are more likely to be admired for academic advancement and encouraged by both teachers and parents to put their energies into academic areas than are girls with the same abilities. She expressed her belief that these expectations increase the possibility that socially delayed males will slip through several years of schooling without anyone noticing that they, in fact, do have major social difficulties.

James Alvino's study (1991) introduced the factor of perfectionism which appears to be fostered by expectations both internal and external to the student. Alvino stated the belief that although perfectionism is a problem for gifted children in

general, it may be more so for gifted boys raised in an environment stressing competition and success. His investigation into the young gifted male at social risk was unique in the reviewed literature, in that it focused on the role of the male ego. He stated that the male ego augmented by the excessive competition and striving characteristic among the gifted can limit how the young male views and applies his abilities. This would also suggest a complex group dynamic, a setting in which the role of young gifted females would also be determined.

Dweck and Licht (1980) found that girls learn to attribute the causes of their successes and failures differently than do boys. According to them, males see successes and failures as directly related to their abilities. They also tend to feel that, if they work hard enough, they will accomplish their goals. Girls, however, tend to attribute their successes to luck. They do not, on the other hand, attribute failures to bad luck or lack of trying, but rather to their own inadequacies. Dweck and Licht concluded that gender issues undoubtedly affect the perceptions of young people as they seek to make sense of their world and find a functioning place in it. They stated that boys have a unique set of needs and problems just as gifted girls do; and, left unattended, these needs and problems can become the source of chronic unhappiness and unfulfillment.

Summary

The review of the literature gives evidence that expectations held by teachers, parents, and peers are worthy of

our attention as we attempt to meet the needs of these academically gifted students. These expectations affect boys and girls differently by gender as a function of their giftedness. We can gain an awareness by gathering data, by gender, regarding preadolescent students' perceptions of teacher, parent, and peer expectations for the purpose of developing more comprehensive programming for the academically gifted.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was developed in the Challenge Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa, to gain more understanding of the affective needs of preadolescent academically gifted males and females enrolled in the program. This chapter describes the program, the development and administration of the survey instrument, and an analysis and discussion of the data returned from the survey.

The Subjects

The four academic replacement programs in the Council Bluffs Community School District provided the population for this study. Specifically, the sample was composed of Challenge Center students in Grades 4, 5, and 6.

Challenge Center students are identified from the district population and are provided similar services at one of the four Challenge Centers. Selected students must transfer to a building that houses one of these programs in order to participate.

The four Challenge Centers are similar in that the instructors share compatible philosophies and participate in the development of curriculum. The centers differ, as do most programs, due to individual traits of both teachers and students. It is significant to mention here that there are striking differences in program philosophies by building in the Challenge Centers and that this impacts the way in which each program is implemented and supported. There are also socio-economic differences in the populations associated with each location.

Students are in the Challenge Center for approximately two and one half hours per day. They are compacted through the general curriculum and are provided strategies and opportunities for enrichment. They are often placed in multi-age settings and frequently work with the same instructor for several years. This structure seems to foster a comfort level and is conducive to productive discussion.

The Survey Instrument and Its Administration

The instrument used was a 20 statement questionnaire (Appendix C-1). The statements were generated from the review of the literature and were designed to reflect the respondents' perceptions of expectations of teachers, parents, and peers. The respondents expressed their relative agreement/disagreement with each statement by completing a Likert-type Attitude Scale: I strongly agree; I agree; I am undecided; I disagree; and I strongly disagree. The instrument was submitted for human subjects review (Appendix A-1) and permission was obtained from guardians of respondents (Appendix B-1). One hundred two surveys were sent to the three Challenge Centers in May of 1994. Students ten to twelve years old who had been assigned to the Challenge Center for at least one year were targeted.

The first eight items of the questionnaire asked respondents to rate classroom teachers on their expectations for performance and behavior. They were asked if more or better work was expected and if they were expected to behave better or had more responsibilities or privileges than non-Challenge Center students. They were asked if teachers expected them to perform

well in all academic and non academic areas and were also asked if teachers expected perfection.

In the next seven items, respondents were asked to rate their parents' expectations for performance and behavior. They were again asked if better work and behavior were expected and if they had more privileges and responsibilities because of their placement in Challenge Center. They were asked if parents expected excellent behavior in all academic and non academic areas. Again, they were asked if perfection was expected.

The last five items of the questionnaire addressed the perceived expectations of same-age peers who were not in the Challenge Center program. Respondents were asked if classmates expected better behavior and classwork from Challenge Center students. They were asked if classmates perceived them as having more privileges and responsibilities than their non-gifted peers. They were not asked if they felt that classmates expected perfection; rather, they were asked if classmates felt that Challenge Center students were treated differently. Respondents were also asked if they felt they were treated differently because of their placement.

The four Challenge Center teachers obtained permission from parents and administered the questionnaires. The deadline for completion and return of the questionnaires was June 1, 1994. Sixty-five percent of the questionnaires were returned; thirty-one were from females and thirty-four were from males. The results of the survey were categorized and analyzed by gender and frequency of responses to each item.

Analysis and Discussion of Results

The surveys were separated by gender (Males $n = 34$, Females $n = 31$) and results were tallied on matrices. The tallies were then converted to percents (Tables C-1 and C-2, Appendix C). The results of both males and females and a summary statement of each item were itemized on Table C-3 (Appendix C). For easier interpretation, the "strongly agree" and "agree" columns were collapsed and placed on Table C-4 (Appendix C). The collapsed scores were then compared on Table C-5 (Appendix C).

The hypothesis of this investigation was that preadolescent males who are identified as academically gifted perceive the expectations of parents, teachers, and peers to be greater than do preadolescent girls. The results gathered from the study support this hypothesis, indicating a need for further study of this issue.

More males than females agreed with items on the questionnaire (Table C-5, Appendix C). The two exceptions were that (a) 2% more females than males agreed that teachers expect perfection and (b) 11% more females agreed that teachers give gifted students more responsibilities.

As noted in Table 1 (p. 16), the most striking differences between male and female responses were noticed in the section addressing parent expectations. Thirty-three percent more males than females felt that parents expect more, and almost 50% more males than females felt that parents expect better behavior from their gifted children. Twenty percent more of the total number of male respondents than the total number of female respondents

felt that parents expect more in general (Item 9), while 22% more felt that parents give more privileges (Item 12), and 26% more felt as though they are given more responsibility (Item 13).

Table 1

Collapsed Responses to Questionnaire by Gender: Percent of Females and Percent of Males Who Agree with Statement of Perceptions Concerning Parents

Statement of Perception	% of Females Who Agree	% of Males Who Agree
9. Parents expect more	35	68
10. Parents expect better behavior	9	55
11. Parents expect more in all areas	9	29
12. Parents give more privileges	3	25
13. Parents give more responsibility	3	29
14. Parents expect perfection	3	13
15. Parents treat differently	9	25

Note. See Appendix C-4 (p. 38) for the complete table.

There was not the same evidence of agreement among females in regard to parent expectations. Although 35% of the females surveyed agreed that parents expect more of their gifted offspring, there was an agreement of between 3% and 9% on the other items relating to parent expectations. The males did, however, show strong agreement on the parent items. Sixty-eight percent of the males felt parents expect more academically and 55% felt parents expect better behavior. Only 13% of the males felt that parents expect perfection. The percentages of "agree"

responses on other items relating to parent expectations were between 25-29%.

An even more striking difference was noticed in the "strongly disagree" column for Item 15. In this item, students were asked if they are treated differently by parents because of their placement in gifted programming. Forty-four percent of the females chose "strongly disagree" while only 6% of the males chose "strongly disagree." In the other items that are related to the expectations of parents, from one fourth to more than one third of the females marked the "strongly disagree" column as compared with one fifth of the males.

There were also noticeable differences in the ways that males and females perceived teacher expectations (Table 2, p. 18). Twenty percent more males than females felt they are treated differently by teachers (Item 6), and 23% more males felt teachers expect better work from them than from their non-participating peers (Item 1).

There was strong agreement among the females as well as the males on many of the items, although there was also a notable variance in the strength of the response. For example, sixty-eight percent of the females and 91.7% of the males felt that teachers expect better work from students who receive gifted programming (Item 1). Thirty-eight percent of the girls and 45% of the boys felt teachers expect better behavior (Item 3), and 50% of the girls felt they have more responsibilities (as contrasted with 39% of the boys). Only fifteen percent of the girls and 13% of the boys felt that teachers expect perfection (Item 5).

Table 2

Collapsed Responses to Questionnaire by Gender: Percent of Females and Percent of Males Who Agree with Statement of Perceptions Concerning Teachers

Statement of Perception	% of Females Who Agree	% of Males Who Agree
1. Teachers expect better work	68	91
2. Teachers assign more work	18	29
3. Teachers expect better behavior	38	15
4. Teachers expect better performance in all areas	24	25
5. Teachers expect to be perfect	15	13
6. Teachers treat differently	32	52
7. Teachers give more privileges	30	45
8. Teachers give more responsibilities	50	39

Note. See Appendix C-4 (p. 38) for the complete table.

Most consistency on gender responses was found on items pertaining to peer expectations (Table 3). Overall, approximately 33% of the girls showed agreement with all of the responses and almost 50% of the boys showed agreement with all of the responses. Over 33% of the boys and 20% of the girls perceived that classmates believe that Challenge Center students have more responsibility than students in the regular classroom (Item 18).

It already has been indicated that the male respondents more often agreed with the statements concerning peer expectations than did the female respondents. In referring to Table C-3 (p. 36), it is interesting to note that females chose the "strongly disagree" column much more frequently than did the

Table 3

Collapsed Responses to Questionnaire by Gender: Percent of Females and Percent of Males Who Agree with Statement of Perceptions Concerning Peers

Statement of Perception	% of Females Who Agree	% of Males Who Agree
17. Classmates feel C.C. students are more privileged	33	42
18. Classmates feel C.C. students have more responsibility	21	36
19. Classmates feel C.C. students are treated differently	36	48
20. Classmates treat C.C. students differently	36	46

Note. See Table C-4 (p. 37) for the complete table.

males. Specifically, 53% (18) of the 34 females surveyed strongly disagreed with the statement that teachers expect perfection and 68% (23) strongly disagreed with the statement that parents expect perfection. This compares with the males' responses (N = 31) of 48% (15) and 52% (16) respectively. There were no "strongly disagree" responses to the items by either males or females that suggested that teachers expect more or that classmates feel Challenge Center students are more privileged. No males marked the "strongly disagree" column when asked if classmates felt they had more responsibility, but 18% (6) of the females marked this response.

Summary

The analysis of the survey data can be summarized as follows:

(1) The greatest contrast between the perceptions of preadolescent gifted males and females was on survey items

concerning parental expectations. Males perceived the expectations to be much greater than did the females. (2) There was more agreement among males and females on the items concerning teacher expectations, but there was a notable variance in the strength of the male and female responses with the males' responses being stronger. (3) The most respondent agreement appeared to be on items concerning peer expectations. In general males seemed to be more likely to agree, females seemed to be more likely to disagree with statements of perceptions. In fact, only females marked the strongly disagree column.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

As in Ford's study (1989), the results of this research conducted in the Council Bluffs Challenge Centers demonstrate that students feel they are expected to perform well in all areas rather than just in the areas where they are identified as gifted. Consistent with Roedell's findings (1984), there are comments that seem to indicate perfectionism and a common perception that there is some perfect ideal that they are expected to attain.

In the Hershey and Oliver study (1988), 45% of the students surveyed said parents expect more of gifted students. The average percent of Challenge Center students who agreed with the statement that parents expect more is 52%. Although this figure compares closely, the results by gender remind us of Jay and Loeb's findings (1987): the impact of giftedness can be understood best in the context of gender. It is noteworthy that 68% of the Challenge Center males and 35% of the females agreed that parents expect more of gifted students.

Hershey and Oliver (1988) also found that 47% of gifted students that they surveyed felt that teachers expect more, and 18% said their peers treat them differently. The responses to the Challenge Center questionnaire give strong support to the notion that more is expected of gifted students and that they are treated differently. Ninety-one percent of the Challenge Center males and 68% of the Challenge Center students surveyed agreed that

teachers expect better work. Forty-eight percent of the surveyed males and 36% of the surveyed females indicated that peers treat them differently because of their academic placement.

A general conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that Challenge Center students responding to this survey perceive the expectations of their parents, teachers, and peers to be high. Specifically, it can be concluded that a larger number of male students surveyed indicated such perceptions than did the female students. The most specific and significant conclusion of this study is that gifted males seem to perceive exaggerated expectations of parents in much greater numbers than do the gifted girls. The gifted girls not only fail to support the statements suggesting that parents expect better behavior or universal excellence, they most often strongly disagree.

Recommendations

Throughout discussions leading to the study, the Challenge Center students articulated social and emotional difficulties related directly to their abilities and their placement in a special program. They felt misunderstood when asked to jump through arbitrary academic hoops for classroom teachers. They felt hurt when classmates teased them because they were smart. They suffered the guilt of failure when they were unable to perform as well as was expected of them by their parents.

The results of the questionnaire brought these feelings into focus. It is clear that the Challenge Center students perceived that parents, teachers, and peers had greater expectations of them because they were assigned to the Challenge Center.

Based on the conclusions of this study, additional research needs to be initiated to achieve reliability. One recommendation would be to replicate this study in different environments. Another recommendation would be that similar studies be initiated using a larger number of respondents. Such research would be conducted in order to aid school districts in developing a counseling component as part of comprehensive programming for gifted students.

The purpose of gifted programming is to meet the needs of gifted students whose needs are not met in the classroom. The results of the survey signal some important needs that are not being met by gifted programming. Indeed, gifted programs as they now exist may be creating barriers to the social and emotional development of our gifted youth.

First of all, it is critical that the adults who work and live with these children gain an awareness of perceptions held by them. One way that information can be shared is through workshops that address social and emotional needs. Another is by inserting such information directly into the curricula for the gifted. A comprehensive program might include a parent orientation and an in-service component for classroom teachers.

Also, parents could benefit from having access to relevant articles and research and from sharing concerns with others. This seems to work well when a large area, rather than a single school, comes together. Southwest Iowa Talented and Gifted (S.W.I.T.A.G.) is an example of one such organization.

In addition, classroom teachers could benefit from in-service on strategies such as compacting and scaffolding. Once classroom teachers grasp the concept behind the strategies, they possess tools to provide meaningful work for the gifted student in the classroom setting.

Attempts by school districts to implement such changes directed at meeting the needs of able students usually are not met with enthusiasm. This resistance to change is understandable given the already burdened agenda of the classroom teacher. However, if the belief that individual needs should be met is commonly held, school districts can facilitate implementation of programs for gifted students by empowering teachers through adequate in-service and ample opportunity to participate in relevant curriculum development.

Gifted youth, like all youth, have the desire to be accepted. In order for them to deal with unfair expectations from peers, it is important that gifted youth gain insight into their abilities and appreciation for their peers. Gifted programming should offer problem solving skills as well as coping techniques. Activities that empower students to make their own choices must be a component of any comprehensive program for exceptionally able students.

The questionnaire also yielded results that touched on a much larger issue. It was concluded that males perceived parental pressure to be much greater than did their female counterparts. Gender issues are complex, and it is recommended that further research be conducted. Our entire societal structure

is changing in respect to male and female roles. The general classroom reflects this, but it would appear that the gifted classroom magnifies it.

We must continue to observe, to listen to, and to empower our gifted students. With knowledge an understanding can be gained that will better equip parents and teachers to guide, nurture, and cope with these gifted youngsters.

Summary

The perceptions of preadolescent gifted students relating to the expectations of parents, teachers and peers was studied through observation, review of literature, and administration of a questionnaire designed to examine gifted students' perceptions of the expectations of parents, teachers, and peers. The results were interpreted by gender, and they seemed to demonstrate that both males and females perceive that parents, teachers, and peers have high expectations of gifted students. This appeared to be more indicative of males than females. There was the greatest difference by gender concerning the expectations of parents. Males, to a much greater degree, expressed the notion that parents expect more of them because of their giftedness. This was especially true on the item that focused on behavioral expectations. Girls more often chose the "strongly disagree" response; boys more often chose the "strongly agree" response.

One inference drawn from this study was that gifted programming as it now exists may be creating barriers to social and emotional development while providing opportunities for academic growth. Another inference was that gifted

programming does not equally meet the needs of preadolescent gifted males and females. These inferences led to the conclusion that a comprehensive gifted program could effectively address such affective and gender issues. It also would provide information and support for parents, provide adequate in-service for teachers, and would empower gifted students through knowledge and skills.

Finally, it was recommended that similar research be initiated and that such research be considered in the planning stages of program development for the gifted.

Appendix A

Parent Permission

April 29, 1994

Parents of Challenge Center Students
Council Bluffs Community Schools
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503

Dear Parents,

I am currently working on a project as part of my masters degree in gifted education from The University of Northern Iowa. The title of my proposed research is "Student Perception of Parent, Peer, and Teacher Expectations Among Academically Gifted Preadolescent Males."

I would like to have all Challenge Center students, grades four through six, fill out a questionnaire that I have prepared. The data will be kept confidential and will be used only for my paper.

A permission slip is attached. Please sign and return it to your child's Challenge Center teacher. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Bobbe Sutton
Bloomer Challenge Center

Parent Permission for Student Participation in Educational
Research

_____ has my permission to fill out a questionnaire on student perceptions of teacher, parent, and peer expectations. I understand that the data collected from this survey will be used for a research project that is part of Bobbe Sutton's graduate degree program and will be used for no other purpose without my knowledge. I understand that my son's/daughter's name will not be used and that data will be confidential.

(Signature of subject or responsible agent)

Date

(Printed name of subject)

(Signature of investigator)

Date

The subject or responsible agent may contact the office of the Human Subjects Coordinator, University of Northern Iowa, (319) 273-2748, for answers to questions about the research and about the rights of research subjects.

Appendix B

Student Questionnaire

Student Perception of Parent, Peer, and Teacher Expectations Among Academically
Gifted Preadolescent Males
A Questionnaire

Name _____

M or F

Grade _____

Age _____

Challenge Center _____

Instructions: Circle the choice after each statement that indicates your opinion.

1. Teachers expect better work from Challenge Center Students than from students who are not in the Challenge Center.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
2. Teachers assign more work to Challenge Center students than to non Challenge Center students
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
3. Teachers expect better behavior from Challenge Center students than from students who are not in the Challenge Center.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
4. Teachers expect Challenge Center students to perform well in all areas including art, music, and physical education.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
5. Teachers expect Challenge Center students to be perfect.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
6. Challenge Center students are treated differently than non-Challenge Center students in the classroom.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
7. Challenge Center students have more privileges at school than non-Challenge Center students.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
8. Challenge Center students have more responsibilities than non-Challenge Center students in the classroom.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

9. Parents of Challenge Center students expect more than parents of non Challenge Center students.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
10. Parents of Challenge Center students expect better behavior than parents of non-Challenge Center students.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
11. Parents of Challenge Center students expect their children to excel in all areas including art, music, and PE..
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
12. Parents of Challenge Center students give their children more privileges than parents of non-Challenge Center students.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
13. Challenge Center students have more responsibilities at home than non Challenge Center students.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
14. Parents of Challenge Center students expect them to be perfect.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
15. Challenge Center students are treated differently than non-Challenge Center students by their parents.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
16. Classmates expect Challenge Center students to do well in all areas including art, music, and PE..
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
17. Classmates feel that Challenge Center students have more privileges than students who are not in the Challenge Center.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
18. Classmates feel that Challenge Center students have more responsibilities than non-Challenge Center students.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree
19. Classmates feel that Challenge Center students are treated differently than non-Challenge Center students.
Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

20. Classmates treat Challenge Center students differently than they treat non Challenge Center students.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

APPENDIX C

TABLES

Table C-1

Student Perception of Parent, Peer, and Teacher Expectations Among Academically Gifted Preadolescent Females

Subjects: Challenge Center Females, Grades 4-6 (N = 34)

Response

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
1	8	24	15	44	4	12	7	21	0	0	
2	2	6	2	12	10	29	10	29	8	24	
3	2	6	11	32	6	18	11	32	4	12	
4	2	6	6	18	4	12	13	30	9	26	
5	1	3	4	12	4	12	7	21	18	53	
I	6	2	6	9	26	9	26	9	26	5	15
T	7	2	6	8	24	6	18	14	41	4	12
E	8	5	15	12	35	7	21	9	26	1	3
M	9	1	3	11	32	6	18	10	29	6	18
10	0	0	3	9	5	15	18	53	8	24	
N	11	1	3	2	6	3	9	16	47	12	35
U	12	0	0	1	3	8	24	13	38	12	35
M	13	0	0	1	3	6	18	15	44	12	35
B	14	0	0	1	3	0	0	10	29	23	68
E	15	0	0	3	9	4	12	12	35	15	44
R	16	3	9	8	24	12	35	9	26	2	6
17	6	18	5	15	16	47	7	21	0	0	
18	2	16	5	15	16	47	9	26	3	6	
19	5	15	7	21	12	35	9	26	1	3	
20	5	15	7	21	8	24	12	35	2	6	

Table C-2

Student Perception of Parent, Peer, and Teacher Expectations Among Academically Gifted Preadolescent Males

Subjects: Challenge Center Males, Grades 4-6 (N = 31)

Response

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
	1	12	39	16	52	2	6	1	3	0	0
	2	5	16	4	13	9	29	10	32	3	10
	3	6	19	8	26	11	35	6	19	0	0
	4	2	6	6	19	9	29	12	39	2	6
	5	0	0	4	13	6	19	6	19	15	48
I	6	8	26	8	26	4	13	8	26	3	6
T	7	4	13	10	32	6	19	7	23	4	13
E	8	7	23	15	50	4	13	4	13	1	3
M	9	9	29	12	39	2	6	8	26	0	0
	10	3	10	14	45	5	16	7	23	2	6
N	11	1	3	8	26	4	13	13	42	5	16
U	12	2	6	6	19	7	23	14	45	2	6
M	13	5	16	4	13	7	23	13	42	2	6
B	14	1	3	3	10	1	3	9	29	16	52
E	15	2	6	6	19	11	35	10	32	2	6
R	16	3	10	11	35	8	26	10	32	0	0
	17	5	16	8	26	8	26	10	32	0	0
	18	3	10	8	26	11	35	6	19	3	10
	19	6	19	9	29	9	29	6	19	1	3
	20	7	23	7	23	7	23	8	26	2	6

Table C-3

Questionnaire Responses (percent organized by gender)

Perception	Response									
	Female					Male				
	SA	A	U	D	SD	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. Teachers expect better work	24	44	12	21	0	39	52	6	3	0
2. Teachers assign more work	6	12	29	29	4	16	13	29	13	10
3. Teachers expect better behavior	6	32	18	32	12	19	26	35	19	0
4. Teachers expect better performance in all areas	6	18	12	30	26	6	19	29	39	6
5. Teachers expect perfection	3	12	12	21	53	0	13	19	19	48
6. Teachers treat C.C. students differently	6	26	26	26	15	26	26	13	26	10
7. Teachers give C.C. students more privileges	6	24	18	41	12	13	32	19	23	13
8. Teachers give C.C. students more responsibilities	15	35	21	26	3	23	16	13	13	3
9. Parents expect more	3	32	18	29	18	29	39	6	26	0
10. Parents expect better behavior	0	9	15	53	24	10	45	16	23	6
11. Parents expect more in all areas	3	6	9	47	35	3	26	13	42	16
12. Parents give more privileges	0	3	24	38	35	6	19	23	45	6
13. Parents give more responsibility	0	3	18	44	35	16	13	23	42	6
14. Parents expect perfection	0	3	0	29	68	3	10	3	29	52
15. Parents treat differently	0	9	12	35	44	6	19	35	32	6
16. Classmates expect more in all areas	9	24	35	26	6	10	35	26	23	6
17. Classmates feel C.C. students have more privileges	18	15	47	21	0	16	26	26	32	0
18. Classmates feel C.C. students have more responsibility	6	15	47	26	6	10	26	35	19	10
19. Classmates feel C.C. students are treated differently	15	21	35	26	3	19	29	29	19	3
20. Classmates treat C.C. students differently	15	21	24	35	8	23	23	23	26	6

SA=Strongly Agree
Disagree

A=Agree

U=Undecided

D=Disagree

SD=Strongly

Table C-4

Collapsed Responses to Questionnaire by Gender: Percent of Females and Percent of Males Who Agree with Statement of Perception

Statement of Perception	% of Females Who Agree	% of Males Who Agree
1. Teachers expect better work	68	91
2. Teachers assign more work	18	29
3. Teachers expect better behavior	38	15
4. Teachers expect better performance in all areas	24	25
5. Teachers expect to be perfect	15	13
6. Teachers treat differently	32	52
7. Teachers give more privileges	30	45
8. Teachers give more responsibilities	50	39
9. Parents expect more	35	68
10. Parents expect better behavior	9	55
11. Parents expect more in all areas	9	29
12. Parents give more privileges	3	25
13. Parents give more responsibility	3	29
14. Parents expect perfection	3	13
15. Parents treat differently	9	25
16. Classmates expect more from C.C. students in all areas	33	45
17. Classmates feel C.C. students are more privileged	33	42
18. Classmates feel C.C. students have more responsibility	21	36
19. Classmates feel C.C. students are treated differently	36	48
20. Classmates treat C.C. students differently	36	46

Table C-5

Comparison of Agreement by Females & Males Expressed in Percents

Perception	% Agree
1. Teachers expect better work	23% more males
2. Teachers assign more work	11% more males
3. Teachers expect better behavior	7% more males
4. Teachers expect to perform better in all areas	1% more males
5. Teachers expect perfection	2% more females
6. Teachers treat C.C. students differently	20% more males
7. Teachers give C.C. students more privileges	15% more males
8. Teachers give C.C. students more responsibilities	11% more females
9. Parents expect more	33% more males
10. Parents expect better behavior	46% more males
11. Parents expect more in all areas	20% more males
12. Parents give more privileges	22% more males
13. Parents give more responsibility	26% more males
14. Parents expect perfection	10% more males
15. Parents treat differently	16% more males
16. Classmates expect more from C.C. students	12% more males
17. Classmates feel C.C. students are more privileged	9% more males
18. Classmates feel C.C. students have more responsibility	15% more males
19. Classmates feel C.C. students are treated differently	12% more males
20. Classmates treat C.C. students differently	10% more males

Appendix D
Human Subjects Review



April 25, 1994

Bobbe Sutton
529 Oakland Ave
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Dear Bobbe Sutton:

Your project, "Student Perception of Parent, Peer, and Teacher Expectations Among Academically Gifted Preadolescent Males", which you submitted for human subjects review on April 8, 1994 has been determined to be exempt from further review under the guidelines stated in the UNI Human Subjects Handbook. You may commence participation of human research subjects in your project.

Your project need not be submitted for continuing review unless you alter it in a way that increases the risk to the participants. If you make any such changes in your project, you should notify the Graduate College Office.

If you decide to seek federal funds for this project, it would be wise not to claim exemption from human subjects review on your application. Should the agency to which you submit the application decide that your project is not exempt from review, you might not be able to submit the project for review by the UNI Institutional Review Board within the federal agency's time limit (30 days after application). As a precaution against applicants' being caught in such a time bind, the Board will review any projects for which federal funds are sought. If you do seek federal funds for this project, please submit the project for human subjects review no later than the time you submit your funding application.

If you have any further questions about the Human Subjects Review System, please contact me. Best wishes for your project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norris M. Durham".

Norris M. Durham, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

cc: Dr. David A. Walker, Associate Dean
Dr. William Waack

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