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Exploring the Lives of Parents of Traditionally Marginalized Gifted Students

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting and at home. For this study, the researcher gathered information from seven parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students and told their stories. Since the families are traditionally marginalized the population consisted of those who have high intelligence and are a part of a historically oppressed racial/ethnic group. The study was developed using the lens of the Critical Race Theory (CRT). Through the CRT, Capper (2015), recognized that many schools analyze the function of race but lack the knowhow of how to build schools that are anti-oppressive and have an antiracist agenda. Understanding how the CRT has impacts on schools further shows how segregated school programs continue to be, including gifted education. A qualitative study was conducted on parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting to reveal the narratives of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students.

Document Type

Dissertation in Practice

Degree Name

Ed.D.

Department

Curriculum and Instruction

First Advisor

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Third Advisor

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Keywords

Parenting, Gifted education, Marginalized peoples

Subject Categories

Disability and Equity in Education | Education | Gifted Education

Publication Statement

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Exploring the Lives of Parents of Traditionally Marginalized Gifted Students

A Dissertation in Practice

Presented to

the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Lora Romero

June 2022

Advisor: Norma Hafenstein

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Title: Exploring the Lives of Parents of Traditionally Marginalized Gifted Students

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Degree Date: June 2022

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The purpose of this study was to examine the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting and at home. For this study, the researcher gathered information from seven parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students and told their stories. Since the families are traditionally marginalized the population consisted of those who have high intelligence and are a part of a historically oppressed racial/ethnic group. The study was developed using the lens of the Critical Race Theory (CRT). Through the CRT, Capper (2015), recognized that many schools analyze the function of race but lack the knowhow of how to build schools that are anti-oppressive and have an antiracist agenda. Understanding how the CRT has impacts on schools further shows how segregated school programs continue to be, including gifted education. A qualitative study was conducted on parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting to reveal the narratives of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students.

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Chapter One: Introducing the Investigation

Exploring the Lives of Parents of Traditionally Marginalized Students provided insight to the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. The purpose of this study was to better understand how traditionally marginalized parents interact with their child's school as well as their gifted child. For this study, the researcher gathered information from seven families and told their stories. Since the families are traditionally marginalized the population consisted of those who have high intelligence and are a part of a historically oppressed racial/ethnic group. The researcher chose to research this population due to their underrepresentation in gifted programming (Milner & Ford, 2010; Scott & Gentry, 2012; Erwin & Worrell, 2012). With the literature showing that underrepresented parents would like to be involved in the education of their children, however, often do not know how (Park & Holloway, 2013), the researcher wanted to learn more about how parents of those students who are identified as gifted are involved in their children's lives both inside and outside of the classroom.

Personal Interest as the Researcher

When I am asked why I became a teacher, my response is always, "It is my calling." When I was little, I would go home after school and teach my stuffed animals what I had learned in school that day. I always knew that I would one day stand in front of a class full of students whose lives I would impact. School was never easy for me. I

always seemed to have to work just a little harder than everyone around me. I went to school in an affluent neighborhood and always felt that though I could compete academically with my peers, I never received the same recognition as them. It was not until I was a junior in high school that Mr. C took notice of me. He asked why I was going to graduate early rather than attend the community college like so many of the other students were doing. Those students would be graduating with both a diploma and their Associates Degree. To Mr. C's surprise, I was never offered that opportunity. The college counselors never brought that up as an option as I was filling out my early graduation forms.

From that moment, I thought about all of the missed opportunities that I had growing up as a minority student in a wealthy community. It was then that my passion for teaching became even more intense. I knew that the differences I could make would help students who like me, just need the chance to be recognized for the great work that they can accomplish, rather than being doubted because of the color of their skin.

My family has always been my biggest support throughout my education. When they spoke to me about my future it would begin with "When you go to college." That was put in my head since I was little and not going to college was never an option for me. I always remember when I was in fifth grade my dad took me to Regis University to show me the campus and he told me, "That is where you are going to go to college." From that moment, that was my goal and when I graduated high school, I did just that. Unfortunately, even with the numerous scholarships I received, Regis was unrealistic for me, there was no way my family could afford to keep me at that school for four years.

Thankfully, I received an opportunity to go to a community college in Pueblo. It was not Regis, but it served the same purpose for me and I was that much closer to realizing my dream of being a teacher. After graduating with my Associates Degree, I transferred to the Colorado State-University Pueblo. I worked full-time while going to school. While at CSU-P I encountered yet another roadblock, I was unable to fulfil my teaching license due to the fact that I had to work and could not take the semester off to complete student teaching. I switched programs and was determined to find an alternative way to become a teacher.

Not only did I have to overcome hurdles within school, but I have had to learn to be resilient in my personal life as well. During my final semester at CSU-P my God Father committed suicide. I wanted nothing more than to drop out and be close to my family. My mother however was not going to let that happen, reminding me how hard I had worked to become the first in my family to graduate college. I listened to her and persevered through that last semester. After I graduated, my family asked when I was going to get my master's degree. That became my next goal.

While attending Colorado State University Global for my masters, I landed my first job teaching Pre-K at a Title 1 school in Pueblo. I remember when I received the call, the HR director told me that they were going to offer me the position at Bess. I excitedly said "Yes," and she was surprised telling me that most people hear Bess and want to run away. Bess is considered part of the "ghetto" in Pueblo. That did not bother me, I was ready to make an impact on Bess. The very first day of school I remember thinking how funny it was that the HR director said most people run away because the

students and parents that were filing in my classroom looked just like me and my family. I loved teaching at Bess even though I would have to hear my co-workers talk about how we must remember that we are dealing with “these” kids and parents who do not care. I would remind her that I could have been one of “these” kids and helped her understand that like my mom, the parents were working two to three jobs to make ends meet.

Once again, while working at Bess and going to school, tragedy struck. My dad was murdered in front of his home. I found myself again feeling as though I could not concentrate on school and wanting to give up. This time, I did leave Pueblo and my job at Bessemer to be closer to my mom. My mom once again was there to remind me how happy my dad was that I was going to be the first in our family to get a master’s degree and how now I had nieces and nephews who were looking up to me. For her and my dad, I finished my master’s degree graduating with a 4.0. Again, after graduation my family asked, “When are you graduating again?”

I was looking for teaching jobs close to home when I came across a third-grade position at Lotus School for Excellence, I applied for the position and received a call back the next day. I begin teaching my first third grade class in August of 2016. I was very surprised to learn that the class I was given was the honors class and all of the students were either gifted or high potential learners. I really had no idea what I was doing that year. I was thrown into a classroom with no curriculum and extremely smart students. Lotus is such a wonderful place to work; with over 100 different languages represented and students from all of the world, I was determined to make sure that my students received the best education that they could get because I know what it is like as a

minority who would often get overlooked. It was that year that I saw that DU offered an Ed.D. with a specialization in gifted education. With my new position, I thought it was the perfect program to enter. I remember going through the admission process and being interviewed, all I could think about that day is how I really do not belong here and yet here I am. All of the hurdles that I had to overcome brought me to this moment to prove that I am capable of achieving whatever I set my mind to.

With the knowledge that I have gained through my courses at DU and my own personal experiences, it is my goal to better understand the influences that affect how traditionally marginalized parents interact with their child's school as well as their gifted child. For this study, traditionally marginalized is defined as individuals who are a part of a historically oppressed racial/ethnic group. It is my hope that I could share my knowledge with as many schools as possible to bring awareness to the persistent problems traditionally marginalized students face and offer ways to address their needs. I believe that all students deserve an equal chance to succeed.

Community Partner

The researcher chose Dr. K as the community partner to serve as a support and inspiration while completing this work. Dr. K is currently the Gifted Education Coordinator for a local school district and is a former principal of a Gifted and Talented Centered school. Upon meeting Dr. K and discussing my research with her, she was ready to aide in any way possible as she understands the importance and need for research of traditionally marginalized gifted students and their families.

Background of the Problem

Classrooms are reflections of society (Sanguras, 2013). They give a glimpse of the cultures and intellects that make-up our communities (Sanguras, 2013). Much like what is seen in society, our classrooms show disparities between Caucasians and traditionally marginalized students, especially in gifted education (Milner & Ford, 2010). Traditionally marginalized populations include, "...Women; historically oppressed racial/ethnic groups; people who identify as lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and/or queer; immigrants; individuals with mental or physical disabilities; older individuals; and those of lower socioeconomic status women..." (Tate et. al., 2015, p.285). For the purpose of this study, traditionally marginalized gifted students were defined as those who have high intelligence and are a part of historically oppressed racial/ethnic groups.

Teachers, policy makers, administration, psychologists, test developers, and families all play a part in the retention of minorities in gifted education (Milner & Ford, 2010). Gifted minorities are often intellectually gifted but do not have a history of academic achievement and are not nominated for inclusion in gifted programs (Naglieri & Ford, 2005). Naglieri and Ford (2005) declare that we must develop programs based on student needs, rather than trying to fit students into predefined programs. It is also noted that gifted programs need to support the notion of potential (Naglieri & Ford, 2005). That is, recognizing that some students demonstrate their gifts while others show the potential for responding when given the appropriate resources (Naglieri & Ford, 2005). Milner and Ford (2010), stress the importance of early identification of gifted minorities. The authors note that if students are not identified during elementary years, they often will

miss opportunities for gifted, advanced, and accelerated classes (Milner & Ford, 2010). As a result, minorities likelihood of having a successful future is limited (Frye & Vogt, 2010).

Educators report that they often struggle with finding the most effective ways to identify and serve traditionally marginalized students (Naglieri & Ford, 2005). Naglieri and Ford (2005) note that we must provide educators with the time and resources needed to overcome the barriers currently in place that cause these inequalities. Unfortunately, as pointed out by Frye and Vogt (2010), so much time and energy has been put into closing the achievement gap that minority students who are exceling in schools are being overlooked and neglected. Research on bridging the achievement gap states (Glassman and Roelle,1990, p.10):

“Typically, students from minority backgrounds are more likely to begin with lower academic performance and gradually, but continually, fall further behind. As a result, minority students are overrepresented among students who are retained, referred to special education, and most significantly who drop out of school.”

The research goes on to note that many of the inequities in the achievement gap stem from the disadvantages that minorities have in attending preschool programs noting that there is an immediate gap from the time minorities enter the kindergarten classroom with their white peers who have had the resources to preschool (Glassman and Roelle,1990, p.10). Yet there is something missing, Erwin and Worell (2011) note that not all underrepresented students enter school at that disadvantage. While schools have been focusing on the underachieving students, Erwin and Worell (2011), bring up the notion of a new achievement gap, “We contend that the underrepresentation of some racial/ethnic

groups in GATE program is another manifestation of the longstanding and intractable achievement gap in the United States (pg.1)”

Frye and Vogt focus heavily on the lack of representation of African-American students in gifted education (2010). The authors bring attention to the high drop-out rates, high special education identification, and poor academic achievement of African-American students (Frye & Vogt, 2010). Frye and Vogt (2010) pose the question, “How can these conditions continue when we know that we are not meeting the needs of so many students?” (p.7). Frye and Vogt (2010) name many possible causes for the disproportions present. These causes include cultural biases due to negative stereotypes, teacher attitudes, bias testing, and lack of support from teachers, counselors, and administration (Frye & Vogt, 2010). Our current practices are putting traditionally marginalized gifted students at a severe disadvantage for college readiness and a successful future (Fry & Vogt, 2010).

Recognized scholar Donna Ford (2012) has written numerous articles on the underrepresentation of minorities in gifted education. Her work focuses on the underrepresentation of African-American and Hispanic students. Ford (2012) notes that African-American students are underrepresented in gifted programs by 50% and Hispanics are underrepresented by 40%. The reasons listed continue to remain cultural bias, lack of teacher training, biased testing, low expectations for minority students (Ford, 2012). Ford (2012, p.62) writes,

“I propose that a great deal of the factors that contribute to and/or exacerbate underrepresentation rest in the painful reality of prejudice and that both

intentional and unintentional prejudice must be considered and addressed for progress and equitable change(s) to occur.”

While many authors note that the disparities, we see in gifted education can be linked to cultural bias, lack of teacher training, biased testing, lack of support from educators and school officials (Naglieri & Ford, 2005; Ford, 2012; Fry & Vogt, 2010; Milner & Ford, 2010; Sanguras, 2013), parent influence must also be taken into consideration (Strom et. al., 1992, p. 384). “Parent influence is critical in guiding child growth and encouraging the maintenance of culturally defined values” (Strom et. al., 1992, p. 383). When students have opportunities to receive support at home, they will be more likely to succeed in school. In their study, Strom et. al. (1992) provided curriculum for parents of potentially gifted minority students. The study concluded that when given the right resources minority parents are willing to engage with their child and aide them in developing their potential so that they will be more likely to be identified as gifted (Strom et. al., 1992). “Findings show that schools can serve communities better when opportunities for growth are provided to parents as well as their children” (Strom et. al., 1992, p. 383).

Statement of the Problem

Our current educational practices are failing to meet the needs of traditionally marginalized students who are gifted (Strom et. al., 1992; Naglieri & Ford, 2005; Ford, 2012; Fry & Vogt, 2010; Milner & Ford, 2010; Sanguras, 2013). The repercussions of not meeting the needs of traditionally marginalized gifted students include high drop-out rates which in turn leads to an unsuccessful future (Pendarvis and Howley, 1996). In 2011 56% of the student population were White Americans with 68% represented in

gifted and talented programs (Erwin & Worrell, 2011). The total school population for African Americans was 17% with 9% represented in gifted and talented programs (Erwin & Worrell, 2011). Hispanics accounted for 20% of the school population and 12% were represented in gifted and talented programs (Erwin & Worrell, 2011). The total school population for Native Americans was 1.26% with 0.97% being represented in gifted and talented programs (Erwin & Worrell, 2011). With the minority of our population turning into the majority, this is a significant problem (Grantham, 2012). Recognizing that parent influence is vital in student success (Strom et. al., 1992), it only seems plausible that parents understand how to address the needs of their students both at home and at school.

Purpose Statement

Parents often feel that they are misunderstood in the education settings (Ford & Grantham, 1997). They often feel judged and unwelcomed by their child's school (Norwood et. al., 1997). Ford (2010) points out that the inequities that schools are facing are brought on by multiple parties such as families, educators, and peers. Thus, it is vital that educators, peers, and families, work together to begin to desegregate gifted programs. When thinking of ways to include families in school, it is important to note that involvement cannot just mean at home but rather parents need to be involved in making school decisions, volunteer on committees, and utilize other tools from the school to increase motivation within their student (Frasier, 1991).

Minority parents want to be involved in their child's education, many of them just do not know where or how to begin (Frasier, 1991) The purpose of conducting a qualitative study on parents of marginalized gifted students within the educational setting

and at home was to reveal the narratives of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. These narratives share the lived experience of relationships within schools and the influence those experiences have on parenting. Research has shown that traditionally marginalized parents often have a mistrust in the educational system partly because of the experiences that they themselves have had (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106). The fact that our schools are holding minorities at a disadvantage is not a new thing and many parents of minority students were once victims of the bias school system (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106). It is beneficial to share these stories to gain an insight as to how those experiences have influenced traditionally marginalized parents of gifted students. Understanding that traditionally marginalized parents were once in bias school systems, this could potentially influence how they are now parenting their gifted child. Having been in an educational system that showed lack of teacher training, bias testing, lack of cultural sensitivity, an overrepresentation of minorities in special education, experiencing social pressures, and lack of their own parent involvement in their schools may impact their own parenting practices.

Figure 1:

Potential Influences on Traditionally Marginalized Parents of Gifted Children



F

Figure 1

Figure 1 was created by the researcher as a result of the literature review to illustrate the cycle that may influence parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting. For the purpose

of this study, traditionally marginalized was defined as those who have high intelligence and are a part of historically oppressed racial/ethnic group.

Research Questions

The central research question for this study was: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices? The sub-questions that supported the research questions were: (1) What are the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting? (2) What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child? (3) What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

Chapter Summary

This research study examined the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting. The narrative research study was intended to provide insight into the lives of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students in relationship to their child's school and as individual families. Allowing parents to tell their stories enables them to connect with other families who share similar understandings. This study will allow families to recognize that they are not alone and empower them as parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature provides a closer look at the root causes of students who have been traditionally marginalized within the American school system. Exploring the system as one which is set up to oppress traditionally marginalized students from the beginning of their educational career. This original oppression then leads traditionally marginalized students less likely to be identified as gifted compared to their White counterparts. This research will aid in understanding that the American school system is flawed and the need for reform is apparent. Though there are existing studies of traditionally marginalized gifted students, they are limited outdated, and rarely speak of the importance of parent involvement. Thus, showing a need for continued research.

This review explores the role of the Critical Race Theory in education. This theory will provide insight into the original oppression of the school system as well as provide an awareness of the long-standing subordination of traditionally marginalized individuals. Furthermore, the literature will examine segregation of gifted programs, lack of teacher training, lack of cultural sensitivity, social pressures, bias testing, minorities' overrepresentation in Special Education, the importance of parent involvement, and related studies. The literature review will help shine light on the need for further research of traditionally marginalized gifted students and their families.

The purpose of conducting a qualitative study on parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students was to provide insight to their lived experiences in relationship to their child's school and as unique families. Allowing them to share their stories enables them to connect with other families who share similar understandings. Conducting this study allowed families to know that they are not alone and can feel successful as parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students.

Theoretical Framework

Critical Race Theory.

This study utilized the Critical Race Theory as a structure for which the research is conducted. Understanding how the Critical Race Theory has impacted schools, this theory will frame the research which further shows how segregated school programs continue to be.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is said to have begun in the late 1960's to 1970's (Willis, 2008, p. 16). This theory was developed in response to the lack of progression in the civil rights movement (Willis, 2008, p. 16). Derrick Bell is identified as the founder of the Critical Race Theory though many more scholars have made major contributions to the theory. Contributors Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, and Thomas note that CRT is centered on two foundational ideas (Willis, 2008):

The first is to understand how a regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in America, and in particular, to examine the relationship between that social structure and professed ideals such as the "rule of law" and "equal protection." The second is a desire not merely to understand the vexed bond between law and racial power but to change it (p.17).

Willis (2008, p. 17) goes on to note that the CRT does not just include black/white races but also, Latino/a, Asian, Native American, class, gender, sexual orientation, language. Solorzano, defines CRT as it applies to education stating that CRT is, “a framework or set of basic perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural and cultural aspects of society that maintain the subordination and marginalization of People of Color” (Willis, 2008, p. 17).

Willis (2008, p. 23) discussed the use of CRT in research in order to reform our current educational practices. Willis notes, “...they envision change as an outgrowth of more critical conscious awareness and the valuing of all cultures and languages.” Willis goes on to describe how researchers utilize the CRT in order to tell the realities of minorities living in “racialized societies” (2008, p. 23). Furthermore, CRT in education

“Simultaneously attempts to foreground race and racism in the research as well as challenge the traditional paradigms, methods, texts, and separate discourse on race, gender, and class by showing how these social constructs intersect to impact communities of color (Willis, 2008, p. 23).”

Capers (2014) points out that CRT begins with a rejection of legal liberalism which is the constraint of legal boundaries (“Liberal Legalism”, 2016). It is evident that both the procedure and substances of American law are structured to maintain white privilege (Capers, 2014). Capers (2014) discusses how race is not a fixed phenomenon but rather is one that is fluid. This idea, however, is pushed to the side with current color-blind laws that serve to marginalize inequality (Capers, 2014). Capers (2014) brings up the notion that even within traditionally marginalized population, people experience

oppression differently. Using the example that an African-American lesbian experiences oppression in a different way than an African-American male (Capers, 2014).

Furthermore, Capers (2014) describes how recent studies have shown that a racial empathy gap exists. Capers (2014) discusses a study in which Caucasians were asked to watch both Caucasian and African-American individuals being pricked with needles. The results determined that Caucasians experienced more dramatic reflexes when they observed other Caucasians receiving the adverse stimuli Capers (2014). Thus, experiencing greater empathy for their Caucasian counterparts Capers (2014). Capers (2014) notes that until we can bridge the racial empathy gap, we may not be able to get past the racial issues today's society (Capers ,2014).

Capper (2015) notes that studies address racial inequities in schools. Capper (2015) goes on to declare that many scholars focus on suggestions for leadership practice however, there is not a clear framework on how to do so. Multiple studies mention the importance of CRT in educational leadership (Capper, 2015). Nevertheless, there is a missing link between theory and practice in many of today's schools (Capper, 2015). Capper (2015) recognized that many schools analyze the function of race but lack the knowhow of how to build schools that are anti-oppressive and have an antiracist agenda.

It is noted that CRT as a framework, “grounds racial problems in race-specific language in order to define and utilize ideologies free of racial hierarchies that have defined much of the US history, politics, and educational system” (Cobb and Joseph, 2014). Scholars who utilized CRT do so in order to study and transform the relationship among race, racism, and power through the telling of the lived experiences of racialized

minorities (Cobb and Joseph, 2014). With many inequalities stemming from the educational system, the use of CRT as a framework in education is appropriate as it raises questions such as: “What roles do schools themselves, school processes and school structures play in helping to maintain racial, ethnic and gender subordination?” (Cobb and Joseph, 2014).

Furthermore, Dixson and Anderson (2018) explained how the CRT should be examined in schools in order to understand how the “construct of whiteness as property” adds to the inequities of the educational system. The following are noted as characteristics of CRT in scholarship (Dixson and Anderson, 2018):

- CRT rejects the standard racial progress narrative in which the history of race relations in the United States is one of linear uplift and improvement.
- CRT repudiates the view that the status quo arrangements are the natural result of individual agency and merit...Racial accumulation-which is economic, cultural, and ideological (shaping our perceived racial worth)-structures our life chances. CRT exposes these intergenerational transfers of racial compensation.
- CRT challenges the dominate narrative regarding color blindness and color consciousness.
- CRT argues that race is socially constructed, and CRT examines the role of the law in construction of race (including whiteness)
- CRT articulates racism as a structural phenomenon as opposed to a “problem that derives from failure on the part of individuals and institutions to treat people formally the same”
- CRT views racism as an endemic

Dixson and Anderson (2018) go on to list the following parallels of CRT scholarship in education:

- CRT in education argues that racial inequity in education is the logical outcome of a system achievement premised on competition.

- CRT in education examines the role of education policy and educational practices in the construction of racial inequity and the perpetuation of normative whiteness.
- CRT in education rejects the dominant narrative about the inherent inferiority of people of color and the normative superiority of white people.
- CRT in education engages in intersectional analyses that recognize the ways that race is mediated by and interacts with other identity markers.
- CRT in education agitates and advocates for meaningful outcomes that redress racial inequity. CRT does not merely document disparities.

As suggested by Dixson and Anderson (2018), it is important to use CRT as a framework to analyze the work that has been done and what is still left to do.

Counternarrative

A critical component of CRT includes recognizing and valuing the experiential knowledge that people of color hold. “Those who have experienced discrimination speak with a special voice to which we should listen.” (Dixson and Anderson, 2018).

Counternarratives are important to CRT scholarship as they are used to counteract stories of the dominate group which provide a sense of superiority for the dominate group. In order to undermine that superiority, counter storytelling allows for marginalized individuals to trust their senses, experiences, feelings, and experiences while being empowered to share their stories (Dixson and Anderson, 2018). Counternarratives are utilized to “help us understand what life is like for others, and invite the reader into a new and unfamiliar world” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004).

In a similar approach, “critical race methodology” which focuses on the experiences and stories of students of color was found to expose and critique normalized dialogue with perpetuates stereotypes and gave a voice to marginalized groups (Dixson and

Anderson, 2018). Counternarratives have been utilized in many educational research studies with students and parents alike. Dixson and Anderson (2018) state, “Scholars have also utilized counternarratives to illustrate how race shapes the experiences of parents of color in their relationship to K-12 schooling.” As explained:

This process of countering common-sense tales that pose people of color in deficit roles...is necessary to uncover the ways in which inequitable treatment is sanctioned in society...the misrepresentation of people of color as uninvolved parents allows society to place the blame of failing schools within the family structures of people of color and exonerates the systematic processes that maintain inequitable schooling.

By allowing marginalized individuals to tell their own stories in their own words, “Their counternarratives allow them to contradict the Othering process, and thus, challenge the privileged discourses” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004).

Anderson and Dixson (2018) share, “Counternarrative is a significant landmark on the map of CRT in education, and a device that CRT scholars in legal studies have utilized quite skillfully to illustrate the ways that race and racism function in the United States.”

The Permanence of Racism

CRT acknowledges that racism is a permanent part of American life (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). In order to accept the idea of permanence of racism one must adopt a “realist view” which allows for the realization that racism plays a dominate role in America society (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). In addition, permanence of racism acknowledges that, “Racist hierarchical structures govern all political, economic, and social domains” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). These structures allow for the “Privileging

of whites and the subsequent othering of people of color in all arenas, including education” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004).

Whiteness as Property

According to DeCuir and Dixson (2004), with the history of race and racism in the United States Whiteness can be considered a property interest. This property interest has three levels, the right to transfer, the right of use and enjoyment, and the right of exclusion. The use of the aforementioned interests has aided in “establishing Whiteness as a form of property” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). In education, CRT has been used to, “Analyze educational inequity, the curriculum, and specifically, access to a high-quality, rigorous curriculum, has been almost exclusively enjoyed by White students” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). It is further noted that honors and gifted programming has enabled schools to re-segregate due to selection and admission to these types of programs. Noting that, “Students of color have virtually no access to high-quality curriculum” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). Many of the current policies and practices in education reinforce the notion of Whiteness as property (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004).

Interest of Convergence

Another important aspect of CRT is interest convergence. Interest convergence is the idea that “gains” made in marginalized societies are present because of the interest they serve for elite Whites. DeCuir and Dixson (2004) give the example of the early civil rights movement which gave basic rights to African Americans which had been enjoyed by Whites for many years. These rights converged with the self-interest of whites and were sure to not cause disruption to the “normal” way of life for the majority of rights

(DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). DeCuir and Dixson (2004) point out that “White elites are not likely to make a substantive difference in the lives of people of color.”

Critique of Liberalism

The final aspect of CRT discussed is the critique of liberalism. The critique of liberalism addresses colorblindness, the neutrality of law, and the incremental change. While all components contain desirable goals, “Given the history of racism in the U.S. whereby rights and opportunities were both conferred and withheld based almost exclusively on race, the idea that the law is indeed colorblind and neutral is insufficient” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). DeCuir and Dixson (2004) argue that colorblindness fails to address the permanence of racism and the othering of people of color. Furthermore, colorblindness “Has made it nearly impossible to interrogate both the ways that White privilege is deployed and the normalizing effects of whiteness” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). Colorblindness has been utilized as a means of justification to ignore and dismantle race-based policies (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). In addition, colorblindness ignores inequity, inopportunity, and oppression which cannot be remedied by ignoring race. DeCuir and Dixson (2004) go on to discuss equality versus equity noting that changes based on equality assume that citizens have the same opportunities and experiences, “Race, and experiences based on race or not equal, thus, the experiences that people of color have with respect to race and racism create an unequal situation.” Equity on the other hand recognizes an “uneven playing field” When attempts are made to address inequity, these changes appear “To benefit those who are not directly adversely

affected by social, economic, and educational inequality that come as a result of racism and racist practices” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004).

Since the goal of the research was to understand the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized parents of gifted students, CRT was utilized as it “Recognizes the experiential knowledge of people of color as legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination” (Yosso et. al., 2009) CRT explicitly listens to the lived experiences of marginalized individuals through counter-storytelling methods. Researchers utilize the CRT in order to tell the realities of minorities living in “racialized societies” (2008, p. 23). The present study was framed with the Critical Race Theory in mind. The study aims to lift the voices of minority parents who experienced the bias school system and share how that in turn has affected their parenting practices of their traditionally marginalized gifted child.

Segregation of Gifted Programs

Underrepresentation of minority students in gifted education programs has been a critical issue for many decades (Ford, 1998). This matter can be found multiple times, in numerous publications (Ford, 1998; Ford & Grantham, 1997; Fraiser, 1991; Grantham, 2012).

Although overt evidence of segregation may not exist in postmodern schools, a national trend suggests the resurgence of segregation in many U.S. schools. Given the overrepresentation of White students in gifted and talented (GT) programs, a covert segregation agenda exists in U.S. (Michael-Chadwell, 2011 p.99).

Though many scholars argue that the issue is very real and increasingly more significant, there is little research on how to effectively change this phenomenon. The

first mention of underrepresented populations in gifted education programs came in 1936 when Jenkins observed a severe discrepancy in the number of African American and Hispanic students being served in schools (Ford,1998). The Javis Act, which was initiated in 1988, sought to give minorities the opportunity to join gifted education (Ford, 1995). This Act designated monies to maintain gifted education programs and make the priority to be that of identifying minority, low SES, limited English proficiency, and disabled students as gifted individuals (Ford, 1995). Though this Act was set in place over 30 years ago, gifted education as we know it has still fallen short of lending opportunity to minority students (Ford, 2010).

Gifted education was developed to serve those students who have great potential and give them the opportunity to use that potential to the fullest (Ford, 1998). It is noted that children in gifted education programs grow up to live more productive and successful lives (Pendarivs & Howley, 1996). With the minority turning into the majority of our nation (Chavkin, n.d.), it is baffling that our gifted education programs are not giving equal opportunities to minorities to fulfil their potential and lead prosperous lives (Ford, 1995). Rather, our minority students are overlooked, given unchallenging tasks, and all too often labeled as underachievers and placed in special education classrooms (Daniels, 1998). This in turn leads to minority students left feeling incapable of succeeding and many times, dropping out of school (Ford, 2010). Michael-Chadwell (2011), addresses the fact that there is a considerable amount of wasted ability and talents each year due to the lack of minorities in gifted education.

According to Ford (1995) gifted programs are one of the most segregated programs in our nation. Ford, Wright, and Trotman Scott, (2020) discuss how 10 years' worth of data shows that discrimination "is in operation and gravely compromises access for these gifted students of color." One issue that is pointed out by Ford (1995) is the abstract definition of giftedness. The current definition of giftedness utilized by the Colorado Department of Education is ("About gifted," n.d.):

The Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA) defines "gifted" children as:

Those persons between the ages of four and twenty-one whose aptitude or competence in abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment in one or more domains are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Gifted children are hereafter referred to as gifted students. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services. Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:

General or specific intellectual ability

Specific academic aptitude

Creative or productive thinking

Leadership abilities

Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities 12.01(16)

The National Association for Gifted Children has a more simplistic version of the definition of giftedness stating, "Gifted individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10% or rarer) in one or more domains " ("Definition and Rationale", n.d.).

An upcoming documentary titled *The G Word* takes a closer look into the segregation of gifted programs. The director of the film Marc Smolowitz begs the questions, "Who gets to be gifted in America and why in the 21st Century" (2019)? Smolowitz discusses how people hear the term gifted and immediately think of figures

such as Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg. The director hopes to bring light to the fact that giftedness looks much differently across different races and gender. The Smolowitz states, that one's zip code, the place in which they grow up, informs the type of education that is provided. The director takes the viewers into places where giftedness is not expected to be found i.e., the boarder of Mexico, Native American reservation, inner city of Baltimore, and prisons. The Smolowitz ends the brief preview with the following quote, "People are not being seen for who they are, and that is a huge loss to our society" (2019). Marcia Gentry also appears in this documentary (Smolowitz, 2019). Gentry discusses how she lived in a city that had an elementary school that was close to a popular university. Gentry notes that the school had 5% of their population identified as gifted. Yet, in a school that was 5 miles down the road, there were 500 African American students and only 2 were identified as gifted. Gentry explains that she believes gifted education is being used as a tool of segregation in some respects. She mentions the lack of access to appropriate education and the error/bias that occurs within the identification process. Gentry ends with, "The fact that we do not equitably identify kids and deny opportunity and just drive on is not okay" (Smolowitz, 2019).

Even through the multiple ways of defining giftedness and the approach to being identified as gifted through multiple pathways ("About gifted, n.d.), Ford (1995) notes that underrepresented students may still be overlooked. Marker (1996) makes similar connections noting that the current definition and practices of gifted education are still allowing for an underrepresentation of minorities. In order to see positive changes within our gifted programs, Marker (1996) suggests that the definition as well as our current

identification procedures be examined and adapted to fit the needs of our changing demographics. Michael-Chadwell (2016) also makes note of the need for a clearer definition of gifted combining Gardner's definition of intelligence and the federal definition of giftedness Michael-Chadwell (2011) proposes the new definition to be:

When given the chance, children and youth from all social, cultural, socioeconomic, and human endeavor groups can demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate outstanding giftedness and talents, when they are:

1. observed or assessed in one or more areas of multiple intelligences using nontraditional methods, and
2. compared to their peers of the same age and from the same environment. (p.117)

Subotnick, Olszewski, and Worrell (2011) suggest the definition of giftedness is useful across multiple domains and acknowledges multiple perspectives. The authors note that giftedness should (Subotnick, Olszewski, and Worrell, 2011, p.3):

- 1) Reflect the values of society.
- 2) Is typically manifested in actual outcomes, especially in adulthood.
- 3) Is specific to domains of endeavor.
- 4) Is the result of the coalescing of biological, pedagogical, psychological, and psychosocial factors.
- 5) Is relative not just to the ordinary (e.g., a child with exceptional art ability compared to peers) but to the extraordinary (e.g., an artist who revolutionizes a field of art).

As noted by Pendarvis and Howley (1996), many of the inequities within gifted education stem from gifted programs that are not set up with efficacy and are geared toward the elite of our nation. Minorities are not considered to be a part of the elite and are at a complete disadvantage in a system that was already designed to make them fail (Pendarvis & Howley, 1996).

“The browning of public schools will continue to increase through 2020, and by 2050 minority student enrollment will exceed that of White students” (Grantham, 2012, p.215). Grantham’s quote makes one think that with the majority now becoming the minority, our nation must change the way that the system is set up. Gifted minorities are left feeling unnoticed and they “fail to appreciate their own ability because they seem to have no place in the world of scholarship” (Pendarvis and Howley, 1996, p.228).

Gifted Education has taken the “back-burner” to Special Education (Ford, 2010). There is little funding allocated to gifted education and there is a lack of federal mandate making it easy for this program to be swept under the rug and run the way that each district chooses (Ford, 2010). With the lack of uniformity in Gifted Education, programs have evolved to be one of white privilege (Ford, 2010). Howard (2018) supports that notion stating that the current structure of gifted and talented programs reproduces whiteness, power, and privilege and allow for the exclusion of traditionally marginalized students. Meanwhile, minorities are being suppressed from reaching their full potential which Ford (2010) notes will be everyone’s problem. Ford (1998), notes that the underrepresentation of giftedness is due in part to several issues including: screening and definitions, testing for giftedness, school personnel having low expectations, a lack of teacher training, parent nominations are not culturally sensitive, lack of culturally specific characteristics for giftedness, self-nominations which may cause students uneasiness due to negative peer pressure and isolation from peers. In order to combat these issues Ford (1998) offers six ways to start change:

- 1) Use valid and reliable tests

- 2) Utilize multiple sources
- 3) Provide educational support and educational opportunities for minorities
- 4) Properly train teachers
- 5) Increase family involvement in schools.
- 6) Increase and refocus research and literature to improve practices based on the literature.

Understanding that many traditionally marginalized parents were once victims of the bias school system (Park and Holloway, 2013) the segregation of gifted programming that they themselves experienced may have potentially influenced their current parenting practices.

Lack of Teacher Training

In order to ensure highly effective programs, they must be led by highly effective teachers (Ford, 1995). Currently, the teacher training in giftedness is almost non-existent (Ford, 1995). Many teachers report that they did not have one class on giftedness during their undergraduate experience (Ford and Grantham, 1997). Most of the training that educators do get is brought on later in their educational careers and are often only given when educators pursue them on their own (Ford and Grantham, 1997). Much of gifted education identification leans heavily on teacher input (Ford and Grantham, 1997). Teachers who work with minority groups often do not have the training that they need to properly identify gifted students in general but overlook minorities even more often (Ford, 1998). Teachers themselves have been quoted saying, “Every time I come to class, I learn that what I have been doing to keep my GT kids busy might actually be keeping them from learning at a level and pace they need. Why didn’t I learn about this in my teacher education program?” (Berman et. al., 2012, p.18).

“I never really spent much time thinking about what happens in the mind of a GT kid who is bored. I thought as the teacher, my responsibility was to keep everyone moving along at a common pace. I know the “slow kids” need more of my time, but I never realized the “fast kids” are just sitting there doing nothing. I don’t know why this has never dawned on me before?!” (Berman et. al., 2012, p.18).

With little training over giftedness teachers tend to look at behaviors that match their own version of what gifted should be (Ford, 1995). That is behaviors such as being cooperative, punctual, volunteering to answer questions and answering correctly, and one who is neat and organized (Ford, 1995). Unfortunately, these are not typical behaviors of traditionally marginalized gifted students (Park and Holloway, 2013). Furthermore, Michael-Chadwell (2011) points to the instructional practices that are occurring in today’s classroom which are geared toward doing well on high-stakes testing. These practices according to Michael-Chadwell (2011) are geared toward memorization of materials and do not leave much room for higher-order thinking. “Underrepresentation will persist unless a procedural shift occurs among educators and other stakeholders in the identification procedures” (Michael-Chadwell, 2011, p. 105).

Understanding that many traditionally marginalized parents were once victims of the bias school system (Park and Holloway, 2013), experiences that they themselves have had with ineffective educators may have potentially influenced their current parenting practices.

Lack of Cultural Sensitivity

Furthermore, not only are our educators poorly trained on giftedness but they are also poorly trained on cultural diversity and cultural sensitivity (Ford, 1995). When it comes to gifted education, Ford (1995) notes:

Abundant data suggests that gifted programs are the most segregated educational programs in this nation, and that concerned efforts must be made to ensure that minority students, economically disadvantage students, underachievers, and other nontraditional students receive the education to which they are entitled. (p. 1)

Another major factor that is missing from our schools for minority students is positive role modeling (Ford & Grantham, 1997). Minority students need to know that they have someone that they can trust both in and outside of the school setting (Ford & Grantham, 1997). Much of what minorities see in school are White females (Ford & Grantham, 1997). The educators that minorities come in to contact with every day hold low expectations for them (Grantham, 2012). Allen (2017), attributes low expectations for minorities to the labels that are often placed upon them in schools. Noting that due to labels such as English Language Learner, Limited English Proficiency, or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learner, teachers often look at their deficiency rather than their potential (Allen, 2017). They do not create opportunities for minorities to show their true abilities and talents (Grantham, 2012). Ford (1998) notes that teachers have a perception of what gifted students “should be”, those that get all the right answers, participates consistently, is neat, punctual, and cooperative. This, however, is not always the case especially in minority students (Ford, 1998). With a poor educational experience, many gifted minority students will tend to underachieve, and their potential goes unnoticed (Ford, 1998). Most educators in the classroom create unchallenging environments for minority students leaving them unprepared to face their future (Grantham, 2012). Currently, the future of our nation continues with poor education and unequal

opportunities (Ford, 1998). Ford (1998), found similar trends noting that due to biases, minority students are often placed in low ability grouping simply because they are not “expected” to achieve.

Currently, less than 15% of teachers are minorities (Ford and Grantham, 1997). Minority teachers would serve as a great connect for our minority students (Ford and Grantham, 1997). As research has shown that minority teachers are more likely to advocate and nominate minority students for gifted education programs (Ford and Grantham, 1997). Presently teachers that work with minority groups do not have the training that they need to properly identify gifted students in general and overlook minorities even more often (Ford, 1998). Minority teachers are able to serve as smooth transitions from home to school as minority students and parents feel that minority teachers may be more understanding to the needs of students (Ford and Grantham, 1997). Perhaps the lack of minority teachers can be directly linked to the fact that our schools are not set up for minorities to be successful (Ford and Grantham, 1997). Reports mention how minority students tend to drop out of school because they are unnoticed (Ford and Grantham, 1997). Ford (1998), found similar trends noting the dilemma of quality education for minority students. Often, urban schools are faced with funding shortages which is where a high population of minority students attend school (Ford, 1998).

Understanding that many traditionally marginalized parents were once victims of the bias school system (Park and Holloway, 2013), experiences that they themselves have

had with a lack of cultural sensitivity within the school system may have influenced their current parenting practices.

Social Pressures

Another issue with minorities in gifted education originates from peers within their own groups and deficit thinking (Ford, 1995). “Becoming an intellectual in the U.S. requires immersing oneself in and addressing oneself to the very conditions and society that degrade and devalue the Black community from which one comes” (West, 1996, p.72). This quote given by Cornell West speaks to the idea that minorities are accustomed to being put down and let down by the American system. When minorities are given any opportunities, they may often feel that they are going against their families and peers and may be in fear of being ridiculed and labeled by those within their own communities (Pendarvis and Howley, 1996).

Ford (1995) also notes minorities tend to feel that they will lose valuable friendships if they are identified as gifted individuals. Gifted minorities feel torn between what they know they can do intellectually and what is expected of them within their own cultures and communities (Ford, 1995). Minorities also have a difficult time with negative stereotypes Ford (1995). Stereotypes tell others what to “expect” from minorities Ford (1995). These stereotypes often leave minorities believing that they cannot achieve more because the world does not expect them to Ford (1995). These negative self-thoughts lead minority students to conform to beliefs that they cannot achieve and simply give up (Ford, 1995).

Understanding that many traditionally marginalized parents were once victims of the bias school system (Park and Holloway, 2013), gaining insight to the types of social pressures that they themselves experienced may have potentially influenced their current parenting practices.

Bias Testing

With emphasis being placed on tests and IQ scores, it is no wonder that we see such a discrepancy in our gifted programs (Coleman & Shah 2015). Coleman and Shah (2015), note that measuring IQ is a great way to predict the success of an individual. However, IQ does not account for other talents or motivational and social factors (Coleman & Shah 2015). Test biases alone make it extremely difficult for minority students to be considered gifted (Coleman & Shah 2015; Ford, 1995). As mentioned by Ford (1995), the instruments that are used to identify students for giftedness fail to portray the talents that minority students may hold. Not because they cannot perform at a level above their peers but simply because the tests that are used are created for a Caucasian student, not a minority student, let alone one who is learning English as a second language (Ford, 1995). The current testing over relies on student's linguistic abilities putting our English Language Learners at an immediate disadvantage (Michael-Chadwell, 2011).

Unfortunately, very few states have ways to address the problem of biases toward low-income and minority students (Pendarvis and Howley, 1996). If the goal of education really is “to develop the talents of children and youth at the upper ends of distributions in all fields of endeavor to maximize those individuals’ lifetime contributions to society”

(Grantham, 2012, p.216), is education really doing its job? For many minority students, education has been a letdown (Grantham, 2012).

Understanding that many traditionally marginalized parents were once victims of the bias school system (Park and Holloway, 2013), gaining insight to the types of bias testing that they themselves were exposed to may have potentially influenced their current parenting practices.

Minorities' Overrepresentation in Special Education

Scott et. al. (1992), points out that Black and Native American students are often overrepresented in special education programs. The research notes that these disparities most often stem from the biased testing and a lack of cultural sensitivity (Scott et. al., 1992). Furthermore, Daniels (1998), discusses that our current programming and instructional strategies may account for the reason there is an overrepresentation of minority students in special education. The issue as Daniel (1998), notes, is that teachers do not account for the differences that may exist within gifted minority students and lack the training to understand how giftedness may manifest in other cultures.

Ford (1998) notes that due to biases, minority students are often placed in low ability grouping simply because they are not “expected” to achieve. In 2014 the department of education published the following (Coleman & Shah, 2015):

- Chronic and widespread racial disparities in access to rigorous courses, academic programs, and extracurricular activities. (p. 2)
- Schools serving more students of color are less likely to offer advanced courses and gifted and talented programs than schools serving mostly white populations, and students of color are less likely than their white peers to be enrolled in those courses and programs within schools that have those offerings. (p. 3)

- Challenging and creative courses, programs, and extracurricular activities; effective and qualified teachers, leaders, and support staff; adequate facilities; up-to-date technology; quality education materials; and sufficient funding—are critical to the success of students. Yet, disparities in the level of access to these resources often reflect the racial demographics of schools. (p. 5)

Thus, noting that although we have made some progress, we are continuing to see the same disparities among minority students in gifted programs (Coleman & Shah, 2015).

The following quote so perfectly sums up the next steps to ensure equity and equality in today's educational system. Daniels (1998) writes:

However, we must persist in our attempts to clarify our educational goals and practices by structuring an education system that lends itself to educational equity for all American students, regardless of ethnicity, cultural background, socioeconomic status, or ability level. (p.42)

In their research, Donovan and Cross (2002) discuss the risk that minorities face being labeled as needing special education within schools. Their data shows that the risk index for Native American is 7.45% compared to 6.02% for their White counterparts. The data continues with Asian/Pacific Islander at 2.23%, Black students at 6.49%, and Hispanics at 6.44% all of which are compared to the 6.02% of white students.

The data consistently shows that American Indian/Alaskan Native students are at a higher risk of being placed in special education classes and labeled with a learning disability (Donovan & Cross, 2002). Unfortunately, the disparities do not end there. The same research showed that American Indian/Alaskan Native and Black students are at a higher risk to be labeled as having a mental disability and American Indian/Alaskan

Native, Black, and Hispanic students are at a higher risk for being labeled with an emotional disturbance (Donovan & Cross,2002). The research shows that the risk factor one takes as a minority student who does not follow the “norms” of the classroom to be identified as having many different disabilities.

Understanding that many traditionally marginalized parents were once victims of the bias school system (Park and Holloway, 2013), gaining insight to their experiences with minorities overrepresented in special education may have potentially influenced their current parenting practices.

Importance of Parent Involvement

In 2012, President Obama added to the No Child Left Behind Act asserting that (Park and Holloway, 2013):

There is no program or policy that can substitute for a mother or father who will attend those parent teacher conferences or help with the homework or turn off the TV, put away the video games, read to their child. Responsibility for our children’s education must begin at home. (p.1)

It is imperative for the future that we move away from our current practices and bring in the change that needs to happen to guarantee a bright future for everyone in our nation not just the few and elite (Gallagher, 2012). Children who come from low-income and minority families have the most to gain as asserted by Salerno and Fink (1992). As Ford (2010) notes, blame cannot be placed upon a single entity rather, these inequities are brought on by families, educators, and peers. Since these inequities were brought on by multiple parties, it is essential that educators, peers, and families work as one to begin the desegregation of our gifted programs (Ford, 2010).

If individuals want to see serious changes within the system, it must start with the families of minorities (Grantham, 2012). Minority parents need to feel that they have the power to help their child reach their fullest potential (Coleman & Shah, 2015). Gallagher has similar thoughts when stating, “It is the responsibility of families, schools, and society to create a more favorable atmosphere for the full development of all students—including those with outstanding talents” (Coleman & Shah, 2015, p.73).

When parents are involved in their child’s learning, they can advocate for their child in school and they can closely monitor progress (Frasier, 1991). Parent involvement does not solely mean helping students at home (Frasier, 1991). Parents need to be involved in making school decisions, volunteer on committees, and tools from the school to help motivate their child (Frasier, 1991). It is noted that students feel most successful when they have parents who set academic goals for them, are involved in schoolwork, and who provide more books (Ford, 1995). Further, Salerno and Fink (1992 p. 2) offer the following quotes when it comes to parent involvement:

- "The family provides the primary educational environment.”
- "Parent involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, long-lasting, and well planned.”
- "The benefits are not confined to early childhood or the elementary level; there are strong effects from involving parents continuously throughout high school.”
- "Involving parents in their own child’s education at home is not enough. To ensure the quality of schools as institutions serving the community, parents must be involved at all levels in the school.”
- "We cannot look at the school and the home in isolation from one another; we must see how they interconnect with each other and with the world at large".

Discussions about culturally responsive pedagogy name the following domains: holding high academic expectations and offering appropriate support such as scaffolding; acting on cultural competence by reshaping curriculum, building on students' funds of knowledge, and establishing relationships with students and their homes (Sleeter, 2012). Focusing on the last domain establishing relationships with students and their homes, a problem cited with minority parents is often that educators do not receive the support they need from home (Frasier, 1991). As Frasier (1991) points out, how can parents help their student if they themselves do not understand what it means for their child to be gifted and how to help support them. There is a gap in current practices and best practices according to culturally responsive pedagogy specifically in establishing a relationship with the student and their homes (Sleeter, 2012). For instance, Ford and Grantham (1997) explain how many minority parents often support their families by working multiple jobs which makes it difficult for them to be reached by teachers during regular school hours. Salerno and Fink (1992) make the note that parents themselves do not have to be educated to help their child, they just need to know how to help their child. White (2001), also notes that schools attempt to teach minority students in the same manner as the majority. With that, students and families feel ignored and segregated by schools that do not value their culture (White, 2001).

Educators need to be aware of the stigma that is placed on minorities in regard to schooling (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106). Minority groups often have an "ongoing mistrust and perception of unfair treatment within the schools" (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106). This mistrust stems from multiple places (Park and Holloway, 2013,

p.106). It could be that they themselves have had poor experiences with the educational system (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106). The fact that our schools are holding minorities at a disadvantage is not a new thing and many parents of minority students were once victims of the bias school system (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106). The mistrust can also stem from the parent's perception of school (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106). Minority parents often feel that teachers and school personnel look down on them because of their job, education level, or language barrier (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106). This mistrust can be cleared if educators would take the time to really reach out to families to let them know that they are valued no matter what language they speak, what job they have, or what their education level may be (Park and Holloway, 2013, p.106).

“To successfully nurture the abilities of the gifted minority student, educators must involve minority parents in the education of their children” (Cropper, 1998, p.20). A study completed by Norwood, Atkins, and Tellez (1997) showed that when minority parents are given a supporting, culturally responsive, nonjudgmental environment, they are more likely to attend school function and use tools given at school to support their child academically at home. Educators need to remember that minority parents may not understand the procedures of the education system and all of the practices that go along with it. Many minority parents do not read information related to school such as child development and they do not seek out resources on their own. It is important and seems only just that schools provide a safe place to allow minority parents to ask questions and get the tools they need to help their child succeed. When parents are involved in

education, students have higher motivation, and a more positive image of themselves and their peers (Cropper, 1998).

Parent involvement is the key to success in education especially for those students who are not performing to their fullest potential. Chavkin (n.d.) gives the following eight recommendations to boost minority parent involvement in schools:

- 1) Educators must challenge the myth that minority parents don't care about their children's education. In fact, the research has shown that minority parents want to be involved in their children's education as much as Anglo parents.
- 2) Educators need to collaborate with parents to develop a clear statement about the goals of parent involvement in their school. The statement needs to be based on the premise that parents are as important to children's academic success as educators.
- 3) Every school should develop written policies about working with parents from multicultural perspective. Written policies often encourage more involvement activities and foster enthusiasm for them.
- 4) Teachers and administrators should be provided not only with practical training in the proper ways of working with minority parent, but also the need to be taught about minority cultures. Educators need assistance in obtaining "how-to-do it" materials and understanding the best strategies for effectively involving parents.
- 5) Minority role models should be present in the schools and should participate actively in home-school partnership efforts. Key persons in the community who can provide linkage between families and schools need to be identifies.
- 6) Minority parents should be asked how they would like to be involved with their children's education, and a variety of involvement opportunities should be provided. Educators need to look beyond the traditional ways of working with parents.
- 7) Educators should make certain that a variety of opportunities, based on the interests of parents are available for parent involvement in the schools. Educators should be sensitive to parent' skill levels, estimates of available time, work schedules, and individual preferences as they plan with parents the most appropriate parent involvement activities.
- 8) Educators need to make available the appropriate kinds of resources for parent-involvement efforts. In particular, there should be staff, space, and monetary resources identified and allocated for the implementation of effective parent-involvement in education and demonstrate a commitment to its success. (p.283)

When parents feel that they are welcomed and unjudged in the setting, they will be more likely to connect with their child in a way that they previously thought was impossible (Chavkin, n.d; Fraiser, 1991; Strom et.al, 1992). Parents will feel empowered to be able to help their child and motivate them in school (Chavkin, n.d; Fraiser, 1991; Strom et.al, 1992). They may also be more willing to take on roles within the school to give their child a positive role-model daily (Chavkin, n.d; Fraiser, 1991; Strom et.al, 1992).

Cropper (1998) notes the importance of parent involvement and how it is crucial to student success. Cropper offers eleven ways to boost minority parent involvement (1998, p. 20-24):

- 1) Communicate and prepare handbooks in a language parents understand.
- 2) Respond to messages being returned to school.
- 3) Become knowledgeable about cultural differences.
- 4) Ask parents open-ended questions instead of "yes" or "no" questions.
- 5) Work with community agencies to provide special activities for gifted minority students.
- 6) Compile a list of agencies providing special activities for gifted students and distribute to parents.
- 7) Exhibit nonverbal messages of respect and interest.
- 8) Prepare curriculum that enhances the gifted minority child's strengths and helps develop talents.
- 9) Provide bilingual counselors and educational personnel to work with parents and students to provide information concerning the gifted child.
- 10) Provide suggestions for home activities so that parents might encourage critical thinking and creativity.
- 11) Develop a mentor program to provide role models and support for students and parents.

Along with the 11 ways to boost minority parent involvement, Salerno and Fink (1992) also compromised the following strategies with examples that have increased minority parent involvement across schools in the nation. These examples include at

home learning activities, parent training, enrichment, access, and home/school communication. The list below explains each in detail and names places in which these strategies have proven to be effective (p.13):

- 1) **At Home Learning Activities** These activities include learning packets that parents use with their children. Project C.H.I.L.D. in Arizona and the Texas program, Building Bridges: A Home-Based Program for Migrant Three-Year Old, are two preschool programs that include packets for parents to use at home. These programs have staff that make home visits to train parents in the use of the materials. Vermont's family-oriented summer program serves children age three through twelve. An educational activity booklet introduces families to enjoyable math games, reading and writing activities and construction projects. Teaching staff make home visits to provide parental assistance and support as well as to model learning activities. Kentucky also reports home visits as part of its advocacy services.
- 2) **Parent Training:** Many states provide informational meetings and workshops, often with bilingual materials and in Spanish. The Litchfield Elementary District in Arizona has developed family packets to improve language skills. La Familia Unida, based in Phoenix, Arizona, serves the whole family's educational and social services needs. Parents are offered Adult Basic Education, GED and English as a second language classes, participate in Parent Advisory Council meetings, and are linked with appropriate social services agencies. A District of Columbia program teaches meal planning/nutrition, budgeting and filling out forms. Parents as Trainers workshops were developed by the New York State Migrant Education Program and focus on five aims: stress, children's self-esteem, empowerment, parent involvement in the school, and AIDS education. Each workshop is approximately one and a half hours long, has hands-on activities and is intended to give parents the experience to lead a workshop with other migrant parents. California's Homeschool Partnership Training offers migrant parents of children in pre-K to grade 6 workshops on self-esteem, motivation, home-study skills, parent-teacher conferences, discipline, and parent-teacher partnerships. A number of programs focus on preschool children and their parents. The New York State Migrant Education Even Start program works with parents and their 3- and 4-year-old children on intergenerational literacy activities and parenting skills through home visits. Oregon's Migrant Even Start program presents parent education discussions on drugs and alcohol, child development, nutrition, assertiveness training, among other topics; adult literacy and English as a second language classes;

native language instruction in Spanish and Russian; and GED instruction. Migrant Head Start, a multidisciplinary child development program that serves children from birth to school-age, provides education, health and social services, nutrition, and parental involvement ("Migrant Head Start Provides Comprehensive Services," 1990). Staff make home visits twice a year to ensure that parents can jointly develop their children's goals. Parents are taught how to assess, seek help and care for their children's health as well as taught how to access and utilize local community services and resources. In contrast, the Life Management Skills Parent Retreat in Texas is planned primarily for parents of older youth, particularly those at risk. This counseling retreat focuses on parents' self-image and leadership skills. Alabama, Florida and Texas report parent resource centers that have instructional materials that parents can use. For instance, the Morgan County (Alabama) Migrant Education Program in combination with Chapter I resources has set up a resource center where parents may check out videos, cassettes, and books on child development and mental health topics. Some training focuses on furthering parents' abilities to enhance their children's skills. Make and take workshops are part of Minnesota's summer activities for parents. Arizona has programs for parents that teach them how to help with their children's curriculum. Utah's workshops on math and reading help parents develop their children's skills in those subjects.

- 3) **Enrichment:** Some states provide cultural activities, such as fiestas in Minnesota's summer program and costume-making for a Cinco de Mayo dance, a project of parents in the Liberty Elementary District in Arizona. The Murphy Elementary District in Arizona provides educational excursions for parents to help them improve their English and to encourage them to return to the site with their families. Oregon's migrant middle school students and their parents have the opportunity to attend an annual College Day at the University of Oregon in order to experience college life.
- 4) **Access:** Many states provide transportation, child-care, and translation. These services show a program's determination to involve parents. The services are sporadic, however, and are dependent on a program's priorities.
- 5) **Home/School Communication:** State and local Parent Advisory Councils (PAC) meetings are the primary means of parent-school communication. Pennsylvania's, for example, focus on parent leadership skills. Some states, such as Oregon, keep parents informed through newsletters. Many states have staff that make home visits. One program in Alaska reports over a 60% response rate to its parental needs assessment.

The research is evident, parent involvement is crucial to the success of any student and this is especially true for minority students. Minority students need to know that they have someone that cares and that will push them to achieve more. Since our school system seems to be stuck in a way that is not built on educational equality, parents must be given the tools needed to advocate for their child. If parents do not do it, nobody else will. The research shows that minority parents want to be involved in their child's education just as much as Caucasian parents but again, we find the barriers that exist in our educational system. Educators need to be aware that minority parents lead different lives than they themselves or their "typical" student. Minority parents face language barriers, single family homes, double jobs, and still try to do the best they can for their children. It is up to the educator to reach out and tell parents how they can help and be involved. Educators need to become more focused on flexibility in order to give minority parents the resources that they are longing for to become better parents and advocates. Currently, there is a gap in the literature pertaining to current parenting practices of traditionally marginalized families with a gifted child. The present study aims to address that gap by examining the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting and at home.

Related Studies

Wiles (2014) conducted a study which explored parenting beliefs and practices of immigrant families with a gifted child. Wiles (2014) also looked into how the role of traditional values plays apart in parenting practices when it comes to the gifted child. Wiles (2014) points out, there has been few research that examines the home

environment and strategies of immigrant families. Through her research, Wiles (2014) utilized a portraiture method of qualitative research. Wiles (2014, p.ii) writes, “Using the qualitative method of portraiture, one cross-cultural belief, five cross-cultural parenting practices, and the concept of a Bicultural Academic Home Environment are illuminated through a narrative that combines both aesthetic and empirical detail.” When it came to the role the parenting practices had in the academic success of their gifted child, Wiles (2014) concluded that there are five parenting styles. Those being, an authoritative parenting style, encouraging and motivating conversations, role modeling, supporting passions and interests, and enhancing discipline, mastery, and intrinsic motivation Wiles (2014). Wiles (2014 p. 281) notes that these parenting styles, “Serve two significant roles in nurturing the academic achievement of the gifted children: 1) they constantly direct and redirect the children toward academic achievement and 2) they foster the development of specific habits and qualities of mind that support academic success.”

When discussing the role that tradition and values had on parenting practices for their gifted student, Wiles (2014, p. 285) found the following to be true:

The significance placed on schooling is a traditional value that all of the parents in this study have retained from their home cultures. More importantly, this value establishes the cross-cultural parenting belief that education takes precedence. Herein, we find a perfect example of the bicultural orientation that each parent has assumed in her acculturation process; as the traditional value each home country places on education is filtered through the American context, which generally maintains a greater balance between schoolwork and extracurricular activities. In turn, this establishes the cross-cultural parenting belief that education takes precedence.

Through Wiles' work one can see the amount of effort that immigrant families put toward their child's education. Again, the issue is not that underrepresented families do not want to be involved in schools, they just need to know how (Cropper, 1998).

Another recent study conducted by Lopez (2019), examined how underrepresented cultures and marginalized families' in rural communities perceive success across educational pipelines. Lopez (2019) gives a fascinating personal connection to her study noting how when she receives her doctoral degree, she will be one of the approximately 4% of the Hispanic/Latinos do be awarded such a degree. Lopez (2019, p.11) raises the question, "How, where, and why does this low academic representation of minority populations begin?" Lopez (2019) discusses how educators often struggle with strategies that will enhance the academic success of the Hispanic/Latino population. Lopez (2019) offers five reasons why it is important to conduct such a study. The reasons listed are (Lopez, 2019, p.12):

- 1) The continued trending of low academic success of underrepresented cultures and marginalized populations.
- 2) Social and economic disparities in rural areas.
- 3) Concerns of social/emotional trauma within diverse populations.
- 4) Lack of quality educational access, including resources and support services.
- 5) Life quality related to a sense of family and community well-being.

In her conclusion, Lopez (2019) writes that family's perception of school success can be contributed to the fixed beliefs, patterns of strengths and/or limitations, and sociocultural barriers combined with a mix of social-emotional skills and traits. Further Lopez (2019, p. 340) stresses the important of family stating, "Understanding the significance of family milieu as a marker for school success is an important place to begin the examination of the notion or idea of the American dream as a barrier for underrepresented cultures and marginalized families."

Summary

Through this chapter, it is clear that gifted programs do not come without their fault and tend to be favorable for non-minority students (Milner & Ford, 2010; Scott & Gentry, 2012; Erwin & Worrell, 2012). The segregation of our gifted programs as noted by Ford (1998), Marker (1996), and Pendarvis and Howley (1996), are brought on by the lack of attention gifted education receives, the broad definition of giftedness, lack of access for minority students, and biased testing.

Further, the lack of teacher training and cultural sensitivity enables these disparities to continue to occur (Daniels, 1998; Frye & Vogt, 2010; Ford, 1995). Through Ford's (1995, 2010, 1998, 1997) work, it is evident that teachers do not have the sufficient training they need to adequately refer and recognize gifted minority students. Not only do teachers not recognize potential, but many times students are also afraid to be noticed due to social pressures or deficit thinking brought on by the lack of acknowledgement from teachers (Ford, 2010).

Chapter Three: Methodology

Best and Kahn (2014) note that, “Qualitative descriptive research uses nonquantitative methods to describe *what is*. Qualitative descriptive research uses systematic procedures to discover nonquantifiable relationships between existing variables” (p. 24). According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research begins with assumptions and utilizes theoretical framework to develop a study that examines problems that individuals or groups face. When researchers chose the qualitative method, they are collecting data in a natural setting which is comfortable for the individuals who are participating in the study (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) names nine characteristics of qualitative studies:

- 1) *Natural settings*. Participants are not studied in labs but rather researchers engage with participants in a personal manner. Talking directly to people and seeing them behave within their context.
- 2) *Researcher as key instrument*. The qualitative researcher collects data through examination of documents, observation, and interviews. The researcher may utilize an instrument which they have developed which consist of open-ended questions.
- 3) *Multiple methods*. The researcher is gathers information from multiple sources including interviews, observations, and documents. The researcher analyzes the data looking for themes or categories.
- 4) *Complex Reasoning through inductive and deductive logic*. Researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up and organize the data inductively. This requires the researcher to work back and forth between a set of themes. Researchers may often work with participants so that they lend a hand in shaping themes or abstractions that emerge. Researchers also use deductive reasoning ensuring that the themes that are building match the data. This process requires complex reasoning skills.

- 5) *Participants' multiple perspectives and meanings.* The researcher focuses on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue. Not the meaning that the researcher brings to the research or writers from the literature. The participant meanings suggest multiple perspectives.
- 6) *Context-dependent.* The research is situated within the context or setting of participants or sites. The researcher must understand the contextual features and their influence on the participants experiences.
- 7) *Emergent design.* The research process is emergent. The initial plan for the research cannot be prescribed because the process may change once the researcher enters the field and begins to collect data.
- 8) *Reflexivity.* Researchers convey their background and how it has informed their work. Readers want to know what prompts our interest.
- 9) *Holistic account.* Researchers try to develop a complex picture of the issue which they are studying. This involves reporting multiple perspectives, identifying all factors involved in the study, and sketching a large picture that emerges from the research. Researchers are bound by describing the complex interactions of factors in any situation.

Research Design

Creswell (2007) goes on to note that qualitative research is appropriate when a problem or issue needs to be explored within a group or population in which the variables are not easily identified, easily measured, and a need to hear voices that are often silenced. Qualitative research lends the opportunity to empower individuals to share their stories (Creswell, 2007). This type of research allows for a more flexible writing style which conveys a story and allows for the researcher to understand the setting and context in which participants address a problem (Creswell, 2007).

For study, the goal of the researcher was to tell the stories of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. A narrative qualitative approach was the most fitting for this study as the researcher had a desire to empower individuals (Creswell, 2007). In order to gain participants for the study, the researcher worked with Dr. K who connected the researcher with a family willing to participate. The researcher had to revise

the recruitment approach as it did not yield enough participants. An email was sent to multiple programs affiliated with parents of gifted students. Parents who met the criteria then reached out to the researcher. The rest of the participants were recruited using the snowball sampling method. In this method, the researcher utilized current participants to identify other individuals who may be appropriate for the study (Buss & Kahn, 2014). The snowball sampling continued until the researcher has a sufficient number of participants. According to Buss and Kahn (2014), the ideal sample size is, “large enough to serve as an adequate representation of the population about which the researcher wishes to generalize and small enough to be selected economically- in terms of subject availability and expense in both time and money.” Creswell (2007) notes that in narrative research, there are multiple studies that use one or two participants while others use a larger pool to develop a collective story. For the purpose of this study, the researcher had a sample size of seven parents. This sample size is larger than the one or two noted by Creswell (2007) but allows for the researchers to tell the shared stories of the participants.

In order to gather the information necessary, the researcher conducted interviews with families. Due to the nature of our current state, the interviews were conducted via a Zoom meeting. These interviews took place at a time and location that was most comfortable for the participant. The interviews allowed for the researcher to gather “personal reflections of events and their causes and effects from one individual” (Creswell, 2007, p. 71). The data collected were the stories that parents of traditionally marginalized gifted children shared regarding their experiences both within the

educational setting parenting at home. After the data was collected the researcher coded the information utilizing NVivo in order to sort it into themes and categories. Creswell (2007) recommends that researchers code their data with a short list of initial codes. This initial code is referred to as lean coding (Creswell, 2007). It begins with five to six categories and expands as the researcher reviews the information (Creswell, 2007). It is recommended that the final code list contains no more than 30 categories which the researcher has worked to combine into five or six themes to write the narrative (Creswell, 2007).

The data collected was utilized to gain a better understanding of the role that parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students play within the classroom and at home. The information provided parents of traditionally marginalized students an understanding that they are not alone. In order to present the information, the researcher took the more classical approach (2007). The discussion portion illustrates the experiences the researcher had while observing, interacting, and interviewing the participants (Creswell, 2007). The researcher reported what the participants said and how they interacted while also identifying themes within the research. In order to ensure that the data was accurately represented the researcher was sure to present the stories in a way that, "...preserve(s) their integrity and convey(s) a sense of the 'irreducible humanity' of the person" (Etheridge, 2013, p.9). Furthermore, the researcher utilized the member checking method to ensure that the stories were an accurate account of the participants lived experience as parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students.

Research Questions

“Research questions are not like ordinary questions. They are inquisitorial in that they expect an answer” (Andrews, 2003, p.2). When one becomes a researcher, they enter into a powerful position because they have the ability to frame and control the study through research questions (Andrews, 2003). Researchers must take the time to reflect on what it is like to be asked a question and the vulnerability that it often takes to answer questions that may be personal (Andrews, 2003).

For the purpose of this qualitative narrative study, the research questions were developed to focus on themes that would unite parents in their lived experiences as a parenting traditionally marginalized gifted student. The central research question for this study was: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices? The sub-questions that supported the research questions were: (1) What are the parents’ personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting? (2) What role did the parents’ personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child? (3) What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child’s school?

Data Collection

Creswell (2007) reminds us that data collection is so much more than the procedures and types of data collected.

“It means anticipating ethical issues, involved in gaining permission, conducting a good qualitative sampling strategy, developing means for recording information, responding to issues as they arise in the field, and storing data securely” (Creswell, 2007, p.147).

Creswell (2007, p.149) gives suggestions for data collection activities that are interconnect throughout the research process. Those suggestions include at the very forefront, there should always be attention to the ethical considerations of the research, gaining access and developing a rapport with the participants, ensuring that sampling is purposeful, collecting the data, recording the information, minimizing field issues, storing data securely, and locating a site and the individuals.

These activities are interrelated and are aimed at gathering the best information possible to answer the research questions at hand. For the purpose of this study, it was important to identify parents who have traditionally marginalized gifted students.

Participants

Gaining access to participants means that the researcher must find individuals who can give meaning to their study (Creswell, 2003). “In a narrative study, inquirers gain information from individuals by obtaining their permission to participate in the study. Study participants should be apprised of the motivation of their selection, granted anonymity...and told the purpose of the study” (Creswell, 2003, p. 156). For this study, the researcher interviewed seven parents who have traditionally marginalized gifted students. Traditionally marginalized was defined as individuals who are a part of a historically oppressed racial/ethnic group specifically Black/Latino/and Native American (Willis, 2008, p. 17). The parents themselves were also traditionally marginalized; Black/Latino/and Native American races will be considered. Parents also must have attended an American school. The researcher reached out to Dr. K, who is the gifted director of a local school district and oversees the Gifted and Talented Parent

Organization Group. A recruitment letter was sent out to Dr. K who passed it on to the group as well as an organization within the gifted community. Individuals who expressed interest in the study were screened to ensure they met the qualifications to participate. After choosing a family to be interviewed, the researcher sent them an updated letter asking them to participate in the study.

From there, the researcher gained access to other participants through the parents themselves. The researcher asked parents who have already participated in the study to be connected with other families who showed interested in participating and who meet the qualifications for participating. When the snowball sample did not yield enough participants, the researcher asked that the recruitment letter was sent out to the various groups once again. The researcher continued this process until the goal of seven participants was satisfied.

Setting

After the disclosure of the study, it was the researchers hope that a rapport was built with the families by sharing with them that the goal of this study was to empower them as parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. The researcher wanted the participants to feel comfortable enough to share personal and truthful information through a Zoom meeting. Conducting a Zoom meeting allowed participants to choose a location that they feel most at ease in while complying with safety guidelines.

Interview Procedures

The procedures for preparing and conducting interviews as laid out by Creswell (2003, p. 165) will be followed:

- 1) Determine the research questions.
- 2) Identify interviewees who can best answer the questions.
- 3) Distinguish type of interview.
- 4) Collect data using adequate recording procedures.
- 5) Design and use an interview protocol.
- 6) Refine the interview.
- 7) Locate a distraction free place for conducting the interview.
- 8) Obtain consent from the interviewee.
- 9) Follow good interview procedures.
- 10) Decide transcription logistics ahead of time.

The participants were first asked to virtually sign a consent form which informed them that there is minimal risk in participating in the study, gives a brief overview of the purpose of the study, and made the participant aware that they do not have to participate in the study. Prior to conducting the interviews, the questions were be piloted on parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students through personal contacts.

The interview protocol was set up as follows:

**Interview Protocol Project: Exploring the Lives of Parents of Traditionally
Marginalized Gifted Students**

Time of interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Purpose of the study: The purpose of this study is to examine the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting.

Questions:

- 1) Tell me about your experience as a parent of a traditionally marginalized gifted student?
- 2) Tell me your experience parenting a gifted child?
- 3) Tell me about your own experience within the educational system?
- 4) How does your child's school experience differ from your own?
- 5) How is your child's school experience similar to your own?
- 6) Tell me about a positive interaction your child has had with an educator that supports your child in their giftedness?
- 7) Tell me about a challenging interaction your child has had with an educator that hinders your child and their giftedness?
- 8) Describe your level of involvement in your child's school?
- 9) Describe a time that your child felt respected by an educator.
- 10) What would you like your child's school to know about your family?
Why?
- 11) Tell me about an experience you had as a parent with the school that went well.
- 12) Tell me about an experience you had as a parent with the school that didn't go well.
- 13) Is there anything else you would like to share?

The chart below explains the rationale for each interview question that was chosen:

Table 1

Research Question Rationale

Question	Rationale	Citation
Tell me about your experience as a parent of a traditionally marginalized gifted student?	The goal of the research is to gain a better understanding of parent experiences as the research shows that parent involvement in schools equates to academic success.	(Gallagher, 2012) (Park and Holloway, 2013)
Tell me your experience parenting a gifted child?	The goal of the research is to gain a better understanding of parent experiences as the research	(Gallagher, 2012) (Park and Holloway, 2013)

	shows that parent involvement in schools equates to academic success.	
Tell me about your own experience within the educational system?	Many traditionally marginalized parents have had poor experiences in schools which may influence the way they perceive schools.	(Strom et. al, 1992) (Gallagher, 2012) (Park and Holloway, 2013) (Norwood et. al., 1997)
How does your child's school experience differ from our own?	Many traditionally marginalized parents have had poor experiences in schools which may influence the way they perceive schools.	(Strom et. al, 1992) (Gallagher, 2012) (Park and Holloway, 2013) (Norwood et. al., 1997)
How is your child's school experience similar to your own?	Many traditionally marginalized parents have had poor experiences in schools which may influence the way they	(Strom et. al, 1992) (Gallagher, 2012) (Park and Holloway, 2013) (Norwood et. al., 1997)

	perceive schools.	
Tell me about a positive interaction your child has had with an educator that supports your child in their giftedness?	Many teachers do not have the training needed to effectively teach gifted student. The discussion on positive interactions can give educators an idea of what they can do in the classroom.	(Grantham,1997)
Tell me about a challenging interaction your child has had with an educator that hinders your child and their giftedness?	Many teachers do not have the training needed to effectively teach gifted student. The discussion on challenging interactions can bring awareness to educators about what parents perceive as not acceptable when teaching traditionally marginalized gifted.	(Grantham,1997)
Describe a time that your	Teachers often hold low	(Allen, 2017)

child felt respected by an educator.	expectations for minority students and look at their deficit rather than their potential	
Describe you level of involvement in your child's school	Parent involvement means much more than being involved at home. The research shows that parents also should be involved in school boards, committees and volunteer.	(Frasier, 1991)
What would you like your child's school to know about our family? Why?	Minority parents often feel unwelcomed by the school. Asking what they would like to share with the school may break down these barriers	(Coleman & Shah, 2015)
Tell me about an experience you had as a parent with the school that went well.	Many traditionally marginalized parents have had poor experiences in schools which may	(Strom et. al, 1992) (Gallagher, 2012) (Park and Holloway, 2013) (Norwood et. al., 1997)

	influence the way they perceive schools.	
Tell me about an experience you had as a parent with the school that didn't go well.	Many traditionally marginalized parents have had poor experiences in schools which may influence the way they perceive schools.	(Strom et. al, 1992) (Gallagher, 2012) (Park and Holloway, 2013) (Norwood et. al., 1997)
Is there anything else you would like to share?	This question allows parents to express themselves in any way they chose, giving them a voice.	(Grantham, 2012)

Summary

A narrative study is a way to characterize the human experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1992). The methodology used in this qualitative study *Exploring the Lives of Parents of Traditionally Marginalized Gifted Students* was utilized to gain a better understanding of how the world is understood through the lens of a parent of a traditionally marginalized gifted student. The interview questions aided the researcher in creating themes that related to their unique experiences. The themes that emerged from the research are valuable in answering the central research and sub-question for this study. What are the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized families

with a gifted child? The sub-questions that supported the research questions were: (1) What is the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting? (2) What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child? (3) What role did those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

Chapter Four: Data Collection and Findings

The purpose of this qualitative, narrative study was to examine the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting. For the purpose of this study, traditionally marginalized was defined as those who have high intelligence and are a part of historically oppressed racial/ethnic group. The questions that guided this study were:

How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices?

- 1) What are the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting?
- 2) What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child?
- 3) What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

Contexts of the Study

The research data collected for this study took place over Zoom meetings during the Fall and Winter of 2021. Data was collected for five months as it was difficult to gain participants for this study. The study consisted of one Zoom interview in which

participants agreed to be recorded. The researcher allowed the participants to choose the date, location, and time that worked best for them to be interviewed. The locations varied depending on the participant however, most were in the comfort of their own home. The data collection consisted of one Zoom interview that lasted 60 minutes. Participants were asked to answer 13 questions which were created with the research questions and theoretical framework in mind.

Participants

In order to participate in the study, participants were asked to meet a set of criteria. This included: Being over the age of 18, having a formally identified traditionally marginalized gifted student, parent was also traditionally marginalized, and the parent must have attended school within the United States. For the purpose of this study, traditionally marginalized was defined as those who have high intelligence and are a part of historically oppressed racial/ethnic group. The researcher chose to research this population due to their underrepresentation in gifted programming (Milner & Ford, 2010; Scott & Gentry, 2012; Erwin & Worrell, 2012).

Interviews

The study consisted of one Zoom interview in which participants agreed to be recorded. The researcher allowed the participants to choose the date, location, and time that worked best for them to be interviewed. The locations varied depending on the participant however, most were in the comfort of their own home. The data collection consisted of one Zoom interview that lasted 60 minutes. All participants were given the same questions. The interview questions asked allowed participants to tell their stories as

parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students as well as share their own experiences as a traditionally marginalized student in the United States. The parallel between their experiences and how they chose to parent their student was also identified through the interview questions. The interview questions all aim to answer the researchers central question: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices? As well as the sub-questions:

- 1) What are the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting?
- 2) What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child?
- 3) What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

Table 2*Participant Interview Log*

Participant	Date	Location	Activity	Time
P1: Monica	8/16/21	Zoom-Interviewer/Interviewee were both in their homes.	Zoom interview	7:12-7:50
P2: Jessica	10/21/21	Zoom-Interviewer/Interviewee were both in their homes.	Zoom interview	10:00-11:30
P3: Cristal	10/21/21	Zoom-Interviewer at home/Interviewee at work during naptime.	Zoom interview	1:45-2:15
P4: Rhonda	10/22/21	Zoom-Interviewer/Interviewee were both in their homes.	Zoom interview	7:00-8:00
P5: Carla	11/22/21	Zoom-Interviewer/Interviewee were both in their homes.	Zoom interview	1:45-2:45
P6: Emily	1/6/22	Zoom-Interviewer/Interviewee were both in their homes.	Zoom interview	4:30-5:05
P7: Corina, Colin	1/7/22	Zoom-Interviewer was in a school building/Interviewee was at home.	Zoom interview	3:30-4:15

Table 2 illustrates when the interviews took place, where they took place, and how long they lasted. The table aided the researcher in keeping track of the interviews and participants as well as the pseudonym that was given to each participant.

Data Collection

The following narratives are the stories of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. The parents expressed their raw thoughts and emotions about their own experiences in school, their experiences parenting a traditionally marginalized gifted student, and experiences that their child has had in school. All of which seek to answer the researchers central question: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices? As well as the sub-questions:

- 1) What are the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting?
- 2) What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child?
- 3) What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

Monica. When asked about her experience parenting a gifted child, Monica gave the following response, "For me it is challenging, she is very intelligent and sometimes I try to explain the best of my knowledge whatever the situation is, she responds mom I know that, can you tell me more? She challenges me a lot." Monica went on to explain that she expected a lot from her daughter and often expects more from her than her siblings

because Monica is very aware of her gifted child's capabilities. When asked to describe her own experiences in school, Monica responded, "I struggled a little bit because it was other times, my mom had to work from sun to sun, she had to pay rent bills and everything, she didn't put as much time, she couldn't as she wished. I didn't feel challenged a lot for my education." Monica contributes her difficult experience to ensuring that all of her effort goes into her children and their education. Monica said, "That is the reason I put all of my effort, I put them first and I have the support. I have a partner who works a lot and I have the time to put into their education." With Monica having the support of her partner, she noted that her own educational experience was not at all similar to her own child's. Monica said, "It is not similar at all, my parents had to work sun to sun to pay the bills and put food on the table. It was just different. Now we are not rich but we are not struggling."

When asked about a positive interaction that gifted daughter had with an educator, Monica described a teacher who was able to challenge her daughter during remote learning. Monica remembered her daughter wanted to play with the hoverboard she had received for Christmas. When the teacher noticed a lack of participation, she challenged Monica's daughter to complete iReady lessons while on her hoverboard. Monica remembered the excitement her daughter had and was able to rise to the challenge. When asked about an experience that may hinder her daughters giftedness, Monica was unable to think of any negative experiences. She said her teachers also expect a lot from her and her daughter knows that she does not accept any "I cant's." If she needs help with something, she knows she needs to ask.

Monica is incredibly involved her daughters school. In fact, Monica described her level of involvement as 100%. She recalled that she had just been at the school for orientation, she said, “I gave my number my email, and my address if they need to come talk to me. I chaperone and like to be on committees.” Monica even mentioned that if the school were to read the interview, they would know it was her as she is so involved and will be there anytime. Monica explained that the educators at her daughter’s school were respectful and allowed her daughter to be held accountable for her actions. When asked about an experience she had as a parent that did not go so well, Monica could not think of one. She explained that when she has had issues within the school, she addresses them quickly and with the individuals who are directly involved. Overall, Monica said she has had a good experience with her gifted child’s school. Monica would however like her child’s school to “Go above and beyond with challenging the kids.” She mentioned that her daughter gets bored easily because she already knows so much of the content and would really like her to be more challenged. Monica ended her interview with the words, “I am so proud to be her mom.”

Jessica. Jessica is a mother of two gifted children. She is Latino and her husband is Caucasian. When asked about her experience as a parent of traditionally marginalized gifted student, Jessica responded, “It’s been an okay experience.” She then went on to describe her older son who looks more like her. Jessica has an olive skin tone, dark-brown hair, and dark brown eyes. Jessica noted that when conflict arises at school with her older child, she felt like other students’ sides are taken more. She said she felt the school valued the other child’s side more than her son. She said, “His side was not taken

into account.” Jessica does not believe that the bias is intentional. She then shared a story with me about her son being held back early on. Jessica mentioned that his teacher did not hold him back because he couldn’t handle the material, rather the teacher suggested that Jessica’s son was not emotionally mature enough to move on. Jessica recalled the situation that occurred, “I really noticed in that particular situation that we had a friend who was early access in kindergarten, and they tried to do the same thing with her and she really argued back and fought and she refused to allow them to do it. I didn’t know like I argued back but I don’t think they took my feelings or thoughts in to account.” Jessica explains that she did not feel supported and has never felt supported as a parent trying to help her kids.

Jessica went on to tell me how she tried to teach her children the little bit of Spanish she knows. She said her younger son is twice exceptional and teachers told her that he needed to focus on learning his primary language first. She said after doing her own research she realized that was not the case it is just about learning to speak. Jessica said the school was not willing to work with her. Jessica noted that she felt the school gets more input from her husband’s side and her children are encouraged to reject her culture and her side. Jessica does note that she does not feel like this rejection is explicit but rather implicit behavior. Jessica goes on to say, “I had to advocate a lot for them to even be where they are. There was some of the behavior and things, they were just assumed that they were misbehaving.” Jessica discussed that teachers did not look for an answer to the behaviors that were being exhibited but rather just said they were misbehaving. Jessica compares her own experience to what she sees happening around her. “When I

see some of the other children and I have other friends they had some of the problems and the teachers said hey let's talk to the Special Ed. Department and get him tested to see what is going on. They didn't even think about that with my kids." Jessica says things have since gotten better for her and her children as she was able to be more involved in school. Jessica says, "It's like they see me differently because I am intensely involved but that shouldn't have to be the case." Becoming noticeably upset, Jessica says that she feels left out and isolated. Jessica says, "I don't even go to PTA meetings because it's uncomfortable. When I do go, I am generally the only person of color there and I feel that nothing I say is really heard and it doesn't matter." Jessica gave a specific example of telling the other parents that they should not keep adding extracurricular activities that cost money. She said, "Sometimes \$20 is a lot for people that could be the difference between getting to eat a meal on some days or not." She expressed that she feels completely ignored when she says something like that but if someone else says something similar, they are heard. She feels it is not purposeful, but she does feel isolated. Wiping her eyes, Jessica explained that the other parents do things together, she says she is not invited to participate in these activities unless she asks the other parents what they are doing, then they will ask her if she would like to join. She ended noting that it was exhausting.

When discussing parenting a gifted child, Jessica explains that finding resources has been difficult. She said when her son started school, he attended a school with a high black and brown population. Jessica recalled that the teachers put a lot of effort in getting the low achieving students up to grade level. She feared her son would be overlooked in

the local school or identified as the troublemaker. Jessica said, "If he gets bored, he's not going to always be doing what he's supposed to be doing." Jessica explained that she was unaware that she could have him tested for Giftedness until one of her friends mentioned it. Jessica said, "I'm like how do you guys know about it and I don't and it's like I don't know, I've never asked them, I guess I should probably ask them someday but it's like there's some secret knowledge that they know that I don't." Jessica recalled a friend whose son has dyslexia she said, "They knew where to go to get the stuff that he needed and for me it's been a fight every time. I think my youngest has dysgraphia and as many times I have mentioned it in school, they never tell me how I can get him diagnosed." Jessica said that she has had to collect a background of evidence herself. Has a close friend who has experienced the same however she has not gotten help. Does not feel supported. Jessica explained that since her son is not getting the help he needs at school, when he has assignments that he can do at home she allows him to use text-to-talk. Jessica says whenever he turns in assignments that he completed at home, teachers sound like they are accusing her of writing work for him. Jessica says she will not cheat for him. Jessica goes back to the secret knowledge that others seem to have but she cannot seem to get the same information.

Jessica then recalled a time that she asked about her youngest son not getting homework for speech. She said the teacher first told her that they do not give speech homework. Jessica said that his previous teacher did give her son speech homework. The teacher then told her that she did not send it home because she wasn't sure if it was going to get done. Jessica said, "So what your saying is because we're brown, we won't get it

done because we don't see the value in it?" Jessica added that though those weren't the teachers words, that is how the teacher made her feel. Jessica said she is the one who has had to fight for him. The school wanted to take him off of his services and she asked that they keep him as he was not yet intelligible. Jessica said, "It's heartbreaking and it's frustrating because I don't know where to go to help them." With tears in her eyes Jessica continued, "I have to do research, I want to help them but I don't know where to go and I feel frustrated and I'm not a good parent when I see them struggling with something I know they should get help with. I have had to advocate for them a lot. It's my role as a parent, but I didn't even know how at the beginning, I didn't understand how to do that.

Jessica recalls her own experience in the educational system explain that it "sucked." She graduated in 1997 and was profoundly gifted herself. The school wanted to put her in a higher grade level and her parents didn't allow that to happen. Jessica's parents were concerned with the relationship she would have with her older sister if they were in the same grade. Jessica was always interested in science. She recalled that there were always two groups. On one hand she was involved in MESA (math, engineering, science, achievement) and in that group she felt great. When it came to classroom teacher however, Jessica said, "I felt discouraged to study math and science. I had to fight to be in advanced classes. I saw other people being pulled out and I was like so why don't I get to? And there were like well we just don't know if you're ready for it." Jessica said she told the teachers she was ready and wanted to prove that she could complete the advanced courses. "I had to fight tooth and nail. My mom had no idea. She was like tell them and they may or may not do it for you." "There was one side that said we need more

women and minorities and then the other side that was a constant discouragement away from that.” Jessica recalled a science teacher she had that did not bother to remember any of his female students names. Jessica then said, “Well that’s not true it was his female-colored students. He called all the Asian girls Lisa because that was the first name he learned and he called all the Latina women Jessica because that was the first name, he learned but the boys got their names and the white girls got their names recognized.” Jessica noted that high school was better for her however she was still not offered advanced classes. She said she was stuck in class with all the troublemakers.

Jessica recalled that she felt appalled because some of those kids were very smart although they couldn’t write. Jessica said they were unable to write because no one showed them. The teachers assumed that parents were not helping at home, Jessica said, “Their parents didn’t even speak English.” Jessica recalls feeling heartbroken because she was associated with this group of students because she was “brown.” She forced her way into all the other classes. She recalls the student who were in the “troublemaker” class and said that she helped many of them get to where they were because they were just being passed along. Jessica said, “I felt very out of place, I didn’t belong in either place. Even now, I feel like I have imposter syndrome. I didn’t fit, I was bullied for being smart or I was bullied for being whitewashed, I got it on both ends. It was a frustrating experience.” When asked about how her child’s school experience differs from her own, Jessica explained that her children have never been bullied for being smart or their differences. They have never felt isolated or alone. Jessica does mention that her youngest son has felt isolated and alone but his is because of his speech. Jessica’s

children attend a GT center where they are with other kids who are at their level. Her children have made good friends that they connect with. The school supports her children in making connections. Jessica also said, “They are challenged, they have not had to fight to be challenged.” Jessica accredits some of the differences her children have experienced to having a parent who can advocate for them. Jessica notes that her parents did not know how to advocate for her. Jessica also praised the school for creating a strong sense of community. She said, “My kids have friends of all colors.” Jessica recalls that she herself didn’t have many friends in high school. Her kids have never been told that they were whitewashed. Jessica said, “Nobody tells them I’m surprised that you are as smart as you are because all Mexicans are stupid. That’s the kind of shit I heard when I was a kid. Jessica restates that having a parent who can advocate for them makes a big difference. Again, she said her parents wanted to help but didn’t know how. She also says she struggles with getting resources but does not make it obvious to her children.

When asked how her children’s school experience was similar to her own, Jessica said, “The prejudice of people. My kid is at fault. He is the one of color, he is the one at fault. Not being privileged with interventions as easily as other students are. Having to have someone step for them.” Jessica notes that the parents who have access to supports then have kids who have access to supports. It would be nice that someone recognize the disparity.” Jessica stated that her son often says, “If I had the opportunity, I could have done that too.” Jessica said he’s right but she did know about those opportunities. Jessica was reminded of a time that her son expressed an interest in putting together a solo, and the teacher did nothing. Jessica said that it is constant and she begins to feel like it is

something else. Jessica explained, “I don’t know but I feel the way I do because of my background and the things that I had to deal with in my life. Jessica expressed that she felt underestimated and feels that kids are also underestimated. “It is insulting.”

When asked about a positive interaction with her child’s school that supported their giftedness, Jessica said she sadly did not have a positive experience for her youngest son. However, for her oldest child a teacher encouraged him to go above and beyond. She always encouraged and supported him even though it wasn’t part of the curriculum. She didn’t treat it like it was unimportant. In 3rd grade the teacher helped refine her child’s writing abilities. The teacher found that her son had a unique attention to detail and encouraged him to support his own thoughts. The teacher knew that he saw things from a unique perspective and encouraged him. Jessica did mention that her youngest son does get encouragement with math and science. They let him do his own thing on the side. When describing a challenging interaction. Jessica recalled when her youngest was in third grade. Jessica felt like her child made no progress that year. His teacher kept saying there was no growth in reading. Jessica found that the teacher was not following his IEP. Everything was on google classroom and Jessica did not know how to access the material or content. Jessica felt that it did not matter to the teacher what her son was doing because he was more of a hassle. He then suffered with his self-confidence. His teacher made his refuge a consequence, “She took advantage of something was safe to him.” The teacher wouldn’t give him criticism and was accepting work that was incomplete. Jessica describes her level of involvement as “high before pandemic.” She knew every teacher in the school. They all knew her; a lot still do. Knows parents’ kids. Jessica was there every

day of the week. Jessica would often volunteer in the classroom and would ask what she could do, she was always don't that there was nothing for her to do. Jessica said that other parents were able to do reading groups and she was always more of an observer. Was not at first. Would reach out with interest to volunteer. Other parents were able to do reading groups, she was more of an observer.

When describing a time that her child felt respected, she recalled his 4th and 5th grade teacher. Jessica explains that her child tends to get off top and she will tell him "Put a pin in that idea, I want to hear that idea but right now this is what we are doing." The teacher values his opinions and makes it clear that she does. She values him doesn't ignore him. People pretend that they understand and do not. This teacher does not do that. He feels respected by her. She apologizes when she does make a mistake and she owns up to her actions. When asked what she would like her child's school to know about her family Jessica stated, "I would like my child's school to know that our family comes from a very mixed background. My values and my culture are not the same as everybody else's but nobody is. We value education. We really want to participate; we value helping other people, but we also need to feel valued. We point things out when we feel that we are being treated differently." Jessica includes that people should think about how they say things as well because things hurt. "We might assimilate well but we have a different culture and background that needs to be valued and respected." When discussing an experience that went well at school, Jessica discussed the new principal who started better conflict management. Now, Jessica said her son does not get accused as much and both people get to tell story. Her son now feels heard and not ignored. The principal takes

time to talk to students even after school. The principal has been supportive and wants to find a solution for every kid. Jessica then describes an experience that did not go well. She expressed that her oldest son had a friend who was getting bullied. Her son went to the teacher with his friend to tell the teacher that the bullying was occurring and the teacher said that she had not heard the best stories about him, he shouldn't tell on other people. Jessica said her son felt that he should not take his issues to authorities because they will not listen to him. Jessica's shared these final thoughts, "Just because we are intelligent does not mean we are completely different from other people of our culture. For example, somebody who didn't think they were racist said some kind of racist comment like all these dirty Mexicans but not Jessica, you're different, they don't care about education or whatever but obviously you do. Well, no, I am not an isolated incident. I want people to understand and know there is a spectrum of people in every race just because you're a race doesn't mean your smarter. There is a range of people in all races, and they all need to be supported. Right now, all we support is the middle."

Cristal. Cristal is a Latino mother with a gifted daughter. The time that worked best for Cristal to interview was during nap time at the school where she teaches. When asked about her experience as a parent of a traditionally marginalized gifted student Cristal recalls, "It was hard getting her formally identified, she was identified in 5th grade. She was bilingual, she had to get out of her English Language learner before. I was lucky to have colleagues. To speed up the process." When asked about her experience parenting a gifted child, Cristal explained that when her daughter was little it was difficult. Her daughter had separation anxiety and challenges. Cristal explained that she did not have

the information needed to support her daughter. Cristal said, I started reading. I discovered how to gain access to information. This helped better my parenting. I work a lot sharing this information.” Cristal noted that her quest for knowledge Inspired her to start teaching in a GT facility. From her research she said she went into her new job with an added lens. Cristal mentioned that when she started in her new role, she saw that there were 6 students who were on a behavior plan. Because of her ability to advocate, 4 of those students were later identified as gifted. When explaining her own educational experience, Cristal said, “I was very lucky, I went to a school focused on music and arts. It wasn’t intended for gifted, but we did have choice. My daughter goes to a regular high school she is not encouraged to do what she wants.” When recalling her own experience Cristal said, “My parents wanted me to have a social experience. My philosophy is aligned with that.” Cristal mentioned that her daughter’s high school is very diverse and therefore she has a diverse group of friends. When discussing a challenging interaction,

Cristal recalled the times before her daughter was formally identified. She said that her daughter struggled with separation anxiety and the teacher brought it up in a shameful way. They would often tell her that she was too big to be crying for her mom. Her daughter was also labeled as lazy because she would daydream. When asked about her level of involvement in her daughter's school, she said she asks questions. Like “How are you doing, are you happy.” I have always been a single mom, studying being a teacher. Cristal said she told her daughter she was responsible for her schoolwork. She said she is no on top of grades, but her daughter is open about low grades, and she has never had a teacher call her. Cristal said she trusts her daughter a lot. When asked about a time her

child felt respected, she said, “The math teacher that noticed her talent and how easy things were for her. She felt definitely acknowledged that someone noticed so I would assume it was also respect that she felt. Cristal would like her daughter’s school to know that that they moved. “Her family is me and her, she is independent and handles things alone.” When discussing an experience that went well at school, Cristal said her daughter had a couple of teachers who noticed strengths. The teacher highlighted everything she was good at and then things that she needed to work on. They formulated a plan for her and, “It was totally an extra thing she did.” Cristal then detailed an experience that did not go well, “When we first got here, she came from a very demanding school, so she was used to doing a lot of work and she was being bullied because of that. Even though she spoke Spanish, her Spanish was different because we came from a different Latin place. Even working at the same school, I didn’t have a good response from the teachers. That was very hard and we had to change her school.”

Cristal ended the interview with this note, “Not as a mother but as an educator I work at a bilingual school, and I think the percentage of gifted kids is very high, but our identification is very low. And I also think it’s because our families in our communities need that information because we see giftedness presented in many different ways just because of our culture and then the same way because of our culture we see giftedness with different lenses, maybe disrespectful when kids want to have their own voice and things like that and so I believe we should all have this mission of just sharing all we can about this.”

Rhonda. Rhonda is an African American mother of a gifted son. When asked about her experience as a parent of a gifted child Rhonda said, “I feel not believed, my experience has not felt validated. My student feels disrespected with the slow pace of class. My student could use a lot more not busy work but trivia and connect that across content.” Rhonda shared that one teacher asked her, “If he is gifted why is he crawling around the floor?” Rhonda said she experienced that it feels that if we want it, we have to go out and get it. If we want extra math, science or extra-curricular activities we have to go seek that out.” Rhonda shared that, “The experts in the room know more about your child you and they are going to do what they planned on doing any. They say they are getting your input to check of the box. I would like to have a village that is an extension of my families values not a village that I have to sift through.”

Rhonda then shared that though she has one student who is formally identified she believes that her daughters are also gifted however because they saw that the school has not done anything for her son, she says, “My daughters have turned into chameleons and have dumbbed themselves down. Rhonda shared that she had to do research on her own to learn more about gifted intensities and then understood more about what her son was going through. The more I learn about intensities the more I understand oh that’s what it is. Rhonda said she feels sad because she feels that she is fighting this mediocracy. She understands that her children are just going to get through school without pushing boundaries. Rhonda recalls that when she went to school, she was in her neighborhood school until about third grade where she was bused to a gifted program. Rhonda was in programs just as junior great books, destination imagination, and MESA. Rhonda recalled

noticing the income gradient as she was bused to and from school. “I remember them having activities after school for the community school of which I didn’t feel a part of the community. If I wasn’t on the bus, my parents didn’t have the time or money to pick me up. Of course, I remember being one of the few African Americans in the class.” Rhonda also recalled that she was able to make friends at her new school however, she remembered that she would get invited to parties in their neighborhood, but her friends’ parents weren’t comfortable taking their kids to her side. Rhonda also noted, “I was a Black kid in a black neighborhood. I had a grounding experience when I came home.” Rhonda explains that her own children do not have that same experience. Rhonda also recalled another difference in which she had an advocate. “My principal, she went to bat for me. I was in fourth or fifth grade, I was transitioning. She wanted me to take a test, it was a circles test. I don’t think my parents know she had down that. My teachers were white. Ms. Stark was just there for me. I was female, I just fit in. I did not have a label of ADHD or ODD. I managed to pay attention enough to participate in discussion.”

Rhonda says another difference is kids are doing so much on the computer now, “They cannot just go in and participate in a discussion. The other difference is just behavior. I got in two fights, the bully on the bus stop and a girl at the bus stop. These were kids from my neighborhood. The predominately Black neighborhood.” Rhonda shares that her son had been 17 times starting in kindergarten. Another difference Rhonda notes is that her children wear wigs to school to try to fit in. Rhonda goes on to share, “I wasn’t that far removed from my mom’s generation. Even the lunch ladies were invested in their school.” Rhonda shared that her mother went to a segregated school where

everyone pulled together for the sake of the kids. Rhonda suggested, “She got a better education. I wasn’t that far removed.” Continuing to express the differences between her own experience and that of her child, Rhonda explains that she sees a White is right syndrome with social media whereas her community was more pro their culture and their values instead of stereo typical values. When asked how her child’s experience is similar to her own, Rhonda jokes, “They are catching the bus.” She also shared that her children attend school with a mix of people. “They have teachers who believe they can do it and they have people who think they are tokens.” Rhonda shared that similar to the teacher who was there for her, her children have people rooting for them.

When asked about a positive interaction that her child had that supported their giftedness, Rhonda responded, “I can’t really think of one.” Rhonda then spoke of her daughter who although is not formally identified did enroll in an online GT Program. The teacher told Rhonda that her daughter is gifted even though she has not been formally identified. Rhonda said, “That is the only teacher that picked up on her. The other teachers talk about how nice and fun she is.” When asked about challenges, Rhonda explained, “My son has had nothing but challenging. He is missing exposure to algebra and debate. The focus since kindergarten has been on his behavior. He picks up things quickly even now, and they are almost doubtful of his abilities.” Rhonda explains that her son has grown to not like school. She said he does not do the work because he does not feel respected. However, Rhonda said if he is taken to the side, he can pick up concepts very quickly and can even play music by ear. When asked about her level of involvement in school, Rhonda said, “It has changed over the years. This year I am purposely not

involved, coming out of covid.” Rhonda also said that she wanted her son to attend a different school that aligns more with her values. She gave the example of a Montessori school. Maybe he needs to be in a school with a more democratic process. Rhonda shares that she heard of a school in which students vote on everything. She mentioned that for her gifted son, he may benefit from something like that. As of right now, Rhonda shared that she does not approve of the schools her children go to. In the past however she recalls that she was very involved in her children’s school. She even became a teacher at the same school Rhonda explained, “I am not helicopter parent that does their homework. One of the teachers thought I was doing their work. One teacher said that her son did not do anything all year and then he did something amazing. I am oriented toward pencil and paper. We listen to current events outside of school and have conversations. I give myself a 0 this year, in the past a 5 I am right next door, I am the teacher next to their teacher.”

The researcher then asked about a time that Rhonda’s child felt respected by an educator. After a long pause, Rhonda said, “I can’t think of one, I can think of a quote from my child, “They do not respect me, why should I respect them.” I know teachers have tried; they have rolled out the red carpet. Sometimes we disrespect kids without even knowing it. If they do not know any better, we do not say any better. Teachers disrespect learning styles even at a young age. I cannot think of a time when he came to me and said this teacher respects me.” When asked what she would like her child’s school to know about her family, Rhonda explained, “We are not that family that has all the drama going on. Our GT child brings us as much intensity as he brings them. I wish they would know we value education” Rhonda shares that they see him as ODD and

that's all he'll ever be. Rhonda goes on to say, "I love to see critical thinkers not just yes people." Rhonda believes her son's school thinks they have a chaotic home don't value education because if they did her son would be more respectful. The things they take for granted it is a struggle for us to get to school. Rhonda also shares that when you walk into a gifted room and you are white or Asian people assume you are smart if you are Black and Latino you are just squeaking by you are a token. Rhonda shares, "If you are a Barack Obama, you cannot have any other issues. It is possible to be both." Rhonda also notes that students of color rarely see anyone like them in these programs. Students of color see how unfair the process is before they even get a chance to join it. Lastly,

Rhonda wanted her child's school to know, "Just because we believe we believe in science does not mean we are chucking our faith roots to fit in with academic elites."

When asked about an interaction that went well for her gifted student, Rhonda recalled that online school went better than almost any in person experience. Rhonda explained that the school held an online talent show where he was valorized for his talents. "He didn't get suspended, he got to take breaks, and make lunches, elaborate lunches, he is quite the chef." Rhonda does credit some teachers for trying to make his school experience positive. Rhonda did note that her son enjoys his extra-curricular activities.

When asked about an experience that did not go well for Rhonda's child, she recalled holding her child back in kindergarten on the advice of a teacher. Rhonda said, "I allowed teachers to dictate to me what should happen to him. I let that doubt follow me about."

Rhonda said she later learned that the school would not have received the same amount of money had her child been placed in an accelerated program. Rhonda was noticeably

upset as she described that the school valued budgeting needs over the needs of the students. Rhonda went on to explain that her child often gets suspended for ridiculous things. She says that when her child feels threatened, he goes off and gets himself in even more trouble. Rhonda explains that he gets into a lot of trouble because he continues to talk, she says he feels like no one hears him. Rhonda said she has had to participate in many reentry meetings for her son to go back to school.

Rhonda ended the interview with this final thought, “When I think about maybe what would be the outcome of this study, I would like to share that the gifted Black and Brown kids are out there. They morphed because of the way the system treats them. Some of them morph into people pleasers. They fly under the radar because they really don’t care about the gifted label. Who cares? Some of them are really angry because they don’t know how to really process all the unfairness they perceive. I mean there’s the real unfairness of the world and then they got their own little layered perceived injustice after that and they might present as very angry, the ones with more self-control might present as checked out because they are like this is more than I can deal with, I just want a date to prom, I don’t really care. But, in the long run these are minds that are going to shape the future of law and healthcare and solve our environmental problems. So, whatever we can do to dial them in is really critical right now. And stop pretending they don’t exist because the matrix say they don’t exist. They might start out as a bright, bright burning light but then they hit the prism of the public school system and they just fracture and slow down. So, I guess what I want to say is let’s start early enriching and encouraging and teaching kids about themselves and their learning style, not teaching them that they

are better than anybody else but teaching them that they have purpose and that we need them. They are there, by the time we test them in second grade and 7th grade with the CogAT some of them don't even care they are like and what is that going to do? What is that really going to change for me and my community? In this crazy world that is murdering Black men. So just for them to really know there really is a reason and purpose for them and they can really help and use their platform to help and then I guess just be a little more open to different ways of being gifted. You might have a kid that does have that CogAT score but have you watch their music, their art, have you watched them navigate between cultures, impressive. I just wish I could go back and do it over for my kids. As adults in their lives, let's be a little more sensitive because their coming of age is being captured on camera.

Carla. Carla is an immigrant from Chihuahua, Mexico. Carla is the mother of a traditionally marginalized gifted son. When asked about her experience parenting a traditionally marginalized gifted student, Carla explained her son's name, "I think a lot of the bias comes from first recognizing the surname being of Latino or Mexican origin, it initiates sometimes initiates the bias for students." Carla then goes on to explain that her son looks like her. Carla is fair skinned, has light hair, and green eyes. Carla states that because they look mostly white and can easily blend in, her son hasn't experienced much of the discrimination that his friends and other students did. Carla adds that her son was in advanced classes and had friends that were mostly white. Carla continues by adding that she knew she had to look out for her son as he went into middle school and high school. As an educator herself, Carla took notice of the limited access to opportunities

given to marginalized students. Carla resumed, “He is able to code switch back and forth easily between the mainstream and myself also because we are very advanced in our language skills and our abilities. We’re living the borderline experience where you have one foot in Mexico and one in the United States.” Carla shared that one issue she had with her son is that he is an underachiever and very sensitive. Her son had a problem with a language arts teacher who was very oppressive. Carla stated that she had to speak to this teacher a couple times and asked AP to be present. She stated her son was not doing any work in his class and knew that the teacher was at the root of the issue because of his bias. There was a lack of positive relationship between her son and that teacher. Carla gave an example of an assignment the teacher expected students to do, “He wanted them to write a paper as if they were slaves. That was very inappropriate and as an educator something I would never ask my students to do. Of course, my son did not want to complete this assignment neither did many of the other students.”

At that time Carla’s son was becoming more independent with his ideas and a bit rebellious even with her. “What’s complicated about gifted students is their asynchronous development where he is very advanced intellectually but then social-emotionally he didn’t know how to handle this. So instead of having the resilience I had to prove people wrong and get straight A’s he said screw you I’m not doing this.” Carla shared that her student is still struggling with this, her son now in college had to take a year off. Carla explained that the pandemic was hard on him, and he even fell into a bit of depression. “The emotional intensities of our gifted kids is something that can be damaged, hurt, messed with when you’re dealing with issues of social justice and injustice. I think that is

something we get serious battle fatigue as bilingual teachers, as teachers of color but the kids themselves when they are going through high school. Sometimes they get a little liberation from that in college when they start learning about Critical Race Theory and they get liberated through their understanding of things as they get older.” He was at the age that he hadn’t experienced such bias by a teacher and he was not sure how to handle it. Carla shares that her son also did not share with her what was going on. He was not able to express his needs. Carla told her son that just like there are good teachers, he was also going to experience bad teachers. Carla explains that in our schools, there are academic needs that can be met but are not always afforded to Mexican kids but she was there to make sure that he had access to those opportunities.

Carla expresses that there was a need for social-emotional support that she was unable to get resources for. Carla explained the demographic makeup of the school her son went to noting it’s diversity and her son’s access to opportunities as he went into the pre-engineering program. Carla notes, “Even though there were lots of opportunities in that school, there is that institutional racism nonetheless and when you have seven or eight teachers, you’re going to have a bad apple here and there and it’s so damaging to kids.” Carla shares that her son still has issues and has not developed social-maturity. She shares that her son has been protected against trauma of poverty and understands intellectually what they are talking about but has not experienced suffering like herself and her husband. Carla shares that her son has been thrown off track over the last couple of years. When asked about her experience parenting a gifted child Carla described it as “Intense.” “My husband and I are overachievers, when you’re an overachiever, your child

is born tired.” Carla shared that as a child her son was brilliant, creative, and had advanced language skills. Carla explains that she had to learn to give him his space. Carla went back to the intensities her son displays and noted that it is quite difficult when the child is intellectually advanced yet socially immature. Carla said that she was very controlling. She gave him opportunities on a silver platter, and it did not work. She states that because her and her husband had such a hard life, they were trying to give him more opportunities. Carla stated, “He probably felt smothered. Carla says she had to learn how to be hands off. Carla explained that it was all about giving him opportunities with good intentions. She said her son would not have tried things on his own but with her pushing him, he was able to travel with his class, he went to different camps.

Carla also shared that her son maybe questioning his own sexuality. Carla describes her husband as a very a traditional Mexican and Catholic with lots of family. Carla said, “Coming out would be a big spectacle.” Carla also explained that during the pandemic she was able to focus on her family for once. Carla said she was always working and going to school. The pandemic allowed her to focus that energy on her family. Carla also explained that she believes gifted students have gifted parents. She said she could be intense in her parenting and had to recognize her own issues in order to help her child. Carla explained that as a parent you sometimes have to reflect on your own parenting and pick your battles. Carla explained that the pandemic taught her that family and relationship are the most important thing and nothing else matters. Carla said as long as her son is a good person, it did not matter where he went to college. Carla expressed that she has lots of patience and allows her son to be happy. She is there to give him

unconditional support and love. Carla also communicated her concerns about her son. “I’ve also been very, very scared, I was scared a little bit when he would fall into his depression when he was isolated and he wasn’t bathing or anything, I was concerned about suicide. And that was happening a lot during the pandemic. You have to prioritize what is important and that is your child.” Carla shared that her son is taking a break right now. Carla went on to discuss her own experience as a non-traditional student explaining she received her Doctorate in 2019. She explained that if she had opportunity and knowledge, she could have had her Doctorate degree much sooner. Because Carla is so academically motivated, she struggles with her son’s lack of motivation. She shared that her son has cried to her stating he wasn’t sure how to be motivated. She stated that her son ignores the rules and needs more experiences.

When asked about her own educational experience, Carla stated that she grew up in Southern Colorado, the San Luis Valley which she says was one of the most segregated places. Carla stated that growing up she hated Chicanos because they treated immigrants the worse than the White kids. Carla said she didn’t understand why when their skin was brown. For her, school was safety, a refuge, a sanctuary. Carla shared that were family suffered from extreme poverty and she had a father who was an alcoholic and verbally abusive. While in school, Carla said she developed a perfectionist complex. Carla wanted straight A’s and did not want to get married for her, “School was the only way out.” Carla was granted a full scholarship to Adam’s State College. Carla recalls being one of the only Mexicans in school, “We were very mistreated, I was called dirty Mexican and I was called wetback.” “I grew up with internalized oppression which I found out about

later when I took some college courses.” Carla attended the engineering program at CU Boulder and didn’t know about financial aid. She was working multiple jobs to pay for school. She flunked out of school that year but was given an opportunity to work with immigrant students developing a curriculum. Carla said she struggled with the lack of resources and knowledge but has now created opportunities to educate others. Carla stated that she hated that she blended in with white girls but she felt 100% very different. Carla recalls that it wasn’t until college that she began to learn about the way the system is set up and her own culture and history. She stated that for the last 30 years she had been bringing up biases that exist but was never heard. She said, “Finally now, we are able to talk about things more truthfully. People say that they get it but they do not really get it.” Carla shared that she recently received her principal license but has found it difficult to get a leadership because her beliefs go against the status quo, and she will not go with the flow.

When asked how her son’s school experience differs from her own, Carla stated, “He has a lot more guidance and opportunities.” “The issue has been around motivation. He is lost in all the opportunities. I had a lot of internal motivation. I have always had the love of learning but a task master. I didn’t have the luxury to question. He doesn’t have to go to class to learn.” Carla explained that her son has the opportunity to learn all he wants but he does not want to be given direction. Carla also shares that her reality was ignorance and her son knows too much. Carla states, “Life is harder for kids now, there needs to be a focus on the social-emotional needs of a student. Carla also states that she had to create bilingual opportunities for herself whereas her son went to a bilingual

school. When asked about the similarities between their school experiences Carla noted that school was a sanctuary for her son as well. Her son had a great elementary experience and was able to create strong bonds with his peers, bilingual school, he had a great elementary school experience. Carla recalled one teacher that her son connected with. “The great thing and the rare thing about having the occasional teach of color or identifies in your own culture is that they will understand you and motivate you so I think that she was very motivational in having high expectations and being demanding but she was also very high supports, she was a very good teacher a very confident teacher. And that’s when he was on his way, they had just developed the biliteracy at his school and she had a very strong equity focus so it was kind of like the mom part like she had my mentality about equity but she also had the teacher mentality. He had a lot of good teachers with good intentions but it was very rare to have a teacher of color. For us equity is life and death, especially if you’re a Black family and your child could get killed at any time. My child has not had to worry about that because he could easily blend in as being white but because he is of Mexican background, when he was younger there was that fear that if he did something wrong with teachers that are bias or discriminatory. We do not have the luxury of doing what we want.”

Carla went back to discuss the Spanish teacher that her son felt a connection with explaining that she had high expectations for all kids but especially for her Latino students to make sure that the system didn’t limit them. When asked about a challenging experience, Carla went back to the Language Arts teacher she spoke about at the beginning of the interview. This time Carla added that the teacher told her son that CU

wasn't for everyone. Carla was very put off by this comment as she said, "it undermined my whole plan, it created doubt in my son that CU was not for him. When asked about her level of involvement in her son's school. Carla explained that it was very minimal. She was working and attending school herself. She couldn't make conferences, but she was setting the example of a hard work and school ethic. Carla said she was hands-off except for checking on grades. When asked about a time her son felt respected by an educator, she explained that her son had the opportunity to engage in a project-based class. Carla noted, "He enjoyed that experience, he was thriving in something that was natural to him. It was very hands on, and he thrives in hands-on." Even though he struggled a bit in high school, he still accomplished all of his goals.

When asked about what she would like the school to know about her family Carla stated, "I think the biggest issue is racism. When you say Mexican, everyone thinks it's some bad word it was definitely used as a bad word before you know, dirty Mexican, lazy Mexican all of those biases but when I say I'm Mexican it's my nationality. It is not a bad word it is a nationality of people who have a very proud heritage of centuries of an ancient culture. It is a very prosperous nation even though we have serious problem right now because of this country consuming so many drugs. Being bilingual and bicultural is very important to us. Binational people, people do not recognize who we are. They have low expectations or no expectations. And as communities become more diverse, we need to wise up. The whole idea of assimilation is not only a detriment to the community but unethical to ask somebody to give up their language and culture for the benefit of the concept of being American which is false. Carla then shared an interaction she had with

the school which she felt was positive. She recalled her son's report card when he attended an IB school. She said, "The report card gave a narrative about my son, the feedback was authentic. She stated that there was a lot of positive reinforcement at that school and they focused on goal setting in middle school. As mentioned previously, Carla explained that was a very busy mom and her husband stayed home with her son. She herself did not have very much interaction with the school. When asked about an experience that did not go well, Carla went back to the teacher who told her son CU was not for everyone. Carla stated, "He undermined the whole purpose of parenting." Carla stated that when teachers say things that that, they reinforce the idea that college is not for everyone, and it is okay to be mediocre.

Carla ended the interview sharing the following, "I was always an educator and I fumbled through the system successfully even though I had so many things to overcome. I felt like a failure because many times I did fail. There is the component where you feel responsible of course. It took me a long time to understand that the system is setup, the system pushed me out, the system failed me. My issue is I didn't ask for the supports that I needed. It's the dance between what can you do as an individual and what is the institution responsible for. How is the system supposed to be setup to make sure that first generation students have the supports they need to be successful? I used to say to many of the white volunteers, for a Mexican immigrant family to send their kid to college is like you sending your kid to the moon. It's a totally new unknown frontier. They have no idea what's going to happen." Carla continued to note that there are some many different

families and schools need to address the needs of those families individually. Carla said, “You cannot do the same thing over and over again and expect different results.”

Emily. Emily is a Latina mother of three gifted children. Emily’s children are Hispanic and American Indian. Emily begins her story sharing the difficulty of getting her children identified at their first school. “It was difficult to get them identified or even considered by the gifted program there...all of my kids are both Hispanic and American Indian and for those reasons I found it a bit more difficult for people to take them seriously as students or academically.” Emily goes on to share an example of a teacher whom her child struggled with. “When my eldest daughter was in first grade, she was in the highest reading group which was reading at the third grade level with some of her peers in first and second grade and the teacher had them write a report based on what they just read and the teacher said, “...Your handwriting is terrible, I can’t tell what you are trying to say but I can tell what you are writing is that of a middle schooler. You’re really advanced with your writing, your voice really shines through, but your writing is difficult for me to read.” Emily goes on to describe how the teacher ripped up her daughters writing in front of all of her peers and told her to start again. Emily said that was the “final straw with that school.”

Emily another example of how her daughter’s giftedness was questioned explaining that the school did not believe her STARR test and had her retake the test. Emily also shares how her daughter was bullied at her first school stating, “One of her peers in first grade told her to go back to her country. She tried to explain that she is first nation and American Indian and her roots are deeper in this current territory than those of her peers.

We celebrate Three Kings Day and she was trying to explain why she excited about it and one of her peers who is Jehovah's Witness and doesn't celebrate holidays told her it was dumb that Mexicans try to make up holidays." Emily goes on to explain how her children's new school does a much better job of recognizing her children, yet they are still a minority population. When asked about her experience parenting a gifted child, Emily responded that it was important for her to learn the chain of command. Emily gave an example noting, "When my eldest daughter started in kindergarten and we knew she was reading at a second grade reading level coming into it, her kindergarten teacher recommended her to the TAG program and that TAG teacher said, "We will not do anything for your child until third grade." And that was very interesting for us to know. They said, "The state doesn't require us to do anything for your child until the third grade and that was the way it was written to me as the state doesn't require us to and so, I had to learn that there is a chain of command and just because one person refuses to help your child, you can go to an advocacy committee. That actually got me into GSAC was realizing you know, I wanted to know that not only my kids but every kid in Colorado had the same opportunity and so I was going to try to take it as high as I could possibly go."

When asked about her own experience, Emily stated that she herself is also gifted and attending a school with a low socioeconomic status and went to school with other minorities. Emily said she felt that it was easy to advocate for the instruction that they deserved at that school. She explained how one teacher looped up with her and three other gifted students to ensure that they were getting a proper education. Emily described

how that all changed when she moved from the poorest school district to the richest school district. At her new school, her teacher told her that though she may have been gifted at her first school, she was not gifted at her new school. “They even put me in ESL and I was in ESL having to do the STARR reading test, testing in high school levels in fourth grade and my teacher was getting furious. And so, it came time to do my state report which is our yearly big project we were supposed to do, it was worth 20% of grade and she failed me the first time and it really caused this anxiety in me and I was like okay, maybe I’m not gifted maybe it’s because I was in a poor district and poor kids maybe seem gifted and it caused like this internal struggle within me. She made me rewrite my report 6 different times handwritten so I would be up until 6 in the morning. My mom would be massaging my hands and making me tea, staying up with me so I could get this report done. It wasn’t like I was procrastinating she gave me one night to do it and it was a 16-page report. It was awful it was one of the most challenging times in my life.

I did realize because my mom didn’t let me know but the reason, she failed me was because she didn’t think it was my work, she thought my parents were doing it for me and that there’s no way that some little Mexican kid from a poor district could be completing work that was at this level and so I really struggled with that.” Emily goes on to describe her personal struggles with ADHD which she just recently found out she had. She explains that she would do all of her work and then not turn it in. She said to her it was not a big deal, she knew she was smarter than everyone there but she didn’t want to be seen as smarter than everyone there. She shares that she was bullied for being one of

the only Mexicans in the district and was referred to as “The Mexican Cheerleader.” Emily said, “I’m too white for the Mexicans and too Mexican for the white kids. It was such a struggle and I tried to balance that social-emotionally and academically I was ahead but didn’t want to be ahead and didn’t want to be seen as better than anybody. So, it was quite a struggle. It has been something that I try not to repeat with my children you know that they can find their tribe and they can have the social-emotional filled as well as academic needs.”

When comparing her children’s experiences to her own Emily states that her children started school in a wealthy school district where her mother taught. Emily says after kindergarten they realized that the district was not going to meet the needs of her gifted kids. Her children had to test into their current school and her children feel at home at their new school. Her children are being challenged, finding their peers, and are able to take school at their own pace. Emily is also appreciative that her children’s school does not assign homework. “They’re not spending all night tied to a desk.” Emily states that her eldest daughter had a similar experience to her own with in the educational system as her eldest daughter felt a sense of unworthiness because of her teacher. Emily notes that is no longer the situation. Her eldest also does not feel normal and has been similarly diagnosed with ADHD. Emily said that her children love to learn everything there is to know about a topic which reminds her of herself in school. When asked about a positive experience that Emily has had with her children’s school, she explained that her daughter has a “darkness about her.” Emily explained that they do not want to shame her for expressing herself but want her to do so in a safe way. Emily’s daughter recently wrote a

poem that expressed some of that darkness and her teacher praised her narrative, her voice in the poem, her advanced language, and typing skills, and gave her a lot of positives and made her feel very special and like she did something right. Emily explained that her daughter felt empowered and was given the opportunity to learn and advance. Which now inspired her daughter to write for competitions around the state. When asked about an experience that hindered her child and their giftedness, Emily retold the story of the teacher who ripped up her child's work. Emily explained, "I'm going to stick with the first story that I told you about just because I felt like it was so impactful for her and that was her first-grade teacher ripping up her paper due to handwriting not due to content of what was on the page, or inability to focus, or getting off topic or anything related academically just cosmetically her handwriting didn't look good. Ripping up her paper in front of her peers having that humiliation has taken us almost three years to recover from that. And we actually did end up having to homeschool for a year because she had such anxiety and couldn't complete any of her work at school and we were in the middle of a pandemic so we actually decided to homeschool for one year just because her anxiety around her handwriting was so bad that she wasn't able to complete any of her work.

When asked about her level of involvement in her children's school, Emily said, "Very high but I try not to be a lawnmower parent. I want all of my children to experience their own obstacles and try to take some problem-solving steps and learn some problem-solving steps through those obstacles first before I intervene. When her children have a problem at school Emily said she asks her children if they want her to get

her involved or if they can advocate for themselves. She encourages self-advocacy as much as possible. Because Emily wanted to ensure that her children were getting the education they deserved, she was the “room mom,” on PTO, parent accountability committee, and she has joined gifted associations to advocate for all children who have had similar experiences as her children to be taken into consideration when the school board makes their decisions.

When asked about a time that her children have felt respected by an educator, Emily shared her son’s experience. Emily’s son loved to create games however, they were not always safe for his peers. Emily shared that his teacher asked him to help in creating a safe game that all children could join in. She said he was so excited because he had been feeling isolated, but he and his teacher were able to come up with a way that he could do what he enjoyed that was not going to be harmful and that made his week. When asked about what she would like her children’s school to know about her family Emily responded, “One of the things that is challenging, since they are Native American is my son has his hair grown out so his hair is a little past his shoulders and about three months ago he got a comment from another kindergarten teacher not his kindergarten teacher basically saying that his hair looked sloppy and there were these memes going around like when your child starts school their hair is like pretty and then when they come home they look like they’ve been through a war, so the kindergarten teachers were talking about that’s how he looked all the time because his hair was long and curly and it’s not really like “beautiful” which I think it is and then some of his friends were calling him a girl or a she for a long time because of his long hair and his braid. Most of the time he

wears it in a braid but sometimes he wears it down and so it would be important for their school to learn about their culture not just the American Indian culture but also the Hispanic culture. Like yesterday, my daughter had to explain to the entire Spanish class because she is the “Mexican kid” what Dia de los Reyes Magos is. She enjoys being in the spotlight but it’s also a little bit isolating when your teachers like hey since you’re Mexican you explain what this holiday is. So, I think just kind of that cultural appreciation rather than isolation would be one thing I’d want the kids school to know. When asked about an experience that went well with her child’s school, Emily stated that she has had many positive experiences with her children’s current school. She explained that after the George Floyd murder, her daughter was very passionate about the Black Live Matter movement.

Emily explained that her teacher allowed her interests to fuel her academics. When explaining an experience that did not go well. Emily shared that her daughter had been physically bullied and the teachers continued to partner her daughter with that student because she was the only one who could “handle him.” The bullying continued and Emily was not notified about an incident that had taken place. The principal refused to meet with Emily the next day so Emily met with the assistant principal. The two of them created an action plan to have weekly check-ins and have an open line of communication. When asked about steps the school was taking to make sure the bullying was no longer going to be occurring and inquired about moving her daughter to a new class, the assistant principal told her she did not want her daughters “allegation” to disrupt the whole class. The school told her that they were just going to open that line of

communication so she could report if there was something happening to her. Emily said the school did not do anything to protect her emotionally, academically, or physically so they moved to a new school.

Corina and Colin. Corina and Colin are husband and wife. They are both African American and wanted to take the opportunity to share their experiences with their traditionally marginalized gifted daughter together. When asked about their experience as a parent of a traditionally marginalized gifted student, the couple looked at each other. Corina giggled and asked Colin if he would like to start. Colin started, “It’s difficult, it’s very haphazard whether you are really getting the support that are really best for our child. As an example, they put her in kindergarten, skipped her preschool and put her in kindergarten. In that case I think it was a positive thing, but we were dealing with a lot of push back on that and they weren’t really explaining what we were supposed to have done just that they didn’t like what we did.” Corina jumped in, “Also I don’t think there is a lot of support when your child is gifted, and they skip a grade, and they are now interacting with children that are older. There is not a lot of support there.”

Colin voices, “As far as social-emotional. So, she’s not very good with kids her own age. She deals with kids who are older because she’s been in class with kids who are older.” When asked about their experience parenting a gifted child. Again, the couple looked at each other. Corina asked Colin if she should do that one. He said, “Can I just throw one thing out there? It is an experience in the sense that you will spend a lot of time just finding extra curriculars to keep them interested.” Corina said, “That is pretty much what I was going to say.” Corina shares that their daughter did not hear well when

she was young however she was able to read lips and speak which was the first sign of her daughter's giftedness. Corina goes on, "Once they corrected her hearing problem basically it was a constant struggle to find things that were challenging. It became so challenging that we finally began purchasing homeschool curricula and activities on top of her extra-curriculars to keep her interested in academics. When asked about their own experiences within the educational system.

Corina shared that she grew up in a predominantly white public school experience until middle school. When her parents divorced Corina moved and attended a predominantly black high school and learned that she was advanced. She sat in her classes and felt bored. Corina had to go to a junior college and had to redo high school due to the poor quality of instruction she received. Corina went on to USC to study accounting. Colin was identified as gifted he said, "It was very weird. They did really have a plan on what to do with me or what to do with a lot of the gifted kids. When I got to high school it was like a joke. It was a popularity contest if you got gifted services at least for the first two years. Later on, they fixed it but by then I was checked out. A lot of the gifted kids checked out or they graduated early."

When asked about how their child's school experiences differs from their own. Corina said, "Completely" Colin nodded his head in agreement stating, "I'll go with that." Corina said, "100% different." Colin added, "One of the benefits that I think our daughter has is because we take a very hands on approach to education at this point especially her extra curriculars so we are working very much to not only fill the gaps of education but push in areas that she can either benefit from or that she is drawn to." Colin

checks in with Corina. “Was that a good way to describe it?” Corina responds, “That’s a good way. Our new project with her is she’s working on roller skating. She’s working on kinesthetic kind of stuff.” The two discuss how their daughter has also participated in kayaking and will be doing rock climbing this summer. Corina adds, “I would also say that she’s been in an environment with gifted children. I was in a gifted class in fifth grade and that was the only time I was in a gifted class. She’s been with gifted children almost all the way through. Colin jumps in to add that the type of interaction his daughter is getting with gifted peers is something that he wishes he would have had going to school.

When asked how their daughters experience was similar to their own, Colin said, “She’s Black and she’s gifted that’s always an interesting one.” Corina said, “But school though, it’s completely different. No.” Corina shares that her school questioned whether or not she was gifted. No one questions her daughter’s giftedness. Corina explains that their biggest obstacle has been to keep their daughter academically challenged which is a completely different situation than her own. Corina shares that she is disabled and had to be out of school a lot. Her daughter also has health issues, but they are not keeping her away from school. Colin shares that in his class there was only one other student who was gifted they did not know what do to with them. Corina shares, “I think we did that intentionally. We didn’t want any similarities to our experiences in schooling.” Colin nods in agreement. “And so, we made sure that she did not have those types of experiences that we had. When asked about a positive experience with an educator, Colin and Corina agreed that her first and second grade teacher allowed the students to grow in

areas that they excelled in. Corina recalled that the teacher would test students at the beginning of the year and teach based on those needs. Colin recalled that the teacher went above and beyond in creating her own curriculum to meet the needs of her students. The teacher even contacted teachers in other schools to make sure that their daughters needs were met.

When asked about a challenging experience. Corina recalled that one school wanted their daughter to be in class with same-age peers. Even after Corina and Colin discussed their concerns with the school, they put her in the class with same-age peers and did not support her academically. This transition took place during the pandemic, so their daughter was home a lot. Both Corina and Colin agreed that the change set her back a lot. They eventually changed schools. When asked about their level of involvement in their daughter's school. Colin said that it was less than he would like it to be. Corina and Colin attribute that to the rules and regulations set in place due to Covid restrictions. Prior to Covid Colin explained that he would go in and talk to each teacher asking about what his daughter needs, he says, "keeping my hand on the pulse." He says it is difficult to have that communication right now.

When asked about a time their daughter felt respected by an educator. Corina explained how her daughter was just elected class president because her teacher was the deciding vote. Corina said being class president has boosted their daughter's confidence so much and has really helped challenged her when she gets bored. When asked about something they would like their daughter's school to know, Corina shared that her daughter wrote a story about how she is bored in school even though the entire school is

in French. She would like her daughter's school to challenge her more in math and science. Corina also expressed that she would like to work in partnership with the school to come up with ways to challenge her. When asked about an experience that went well with their child's school. Colin said, "Nothing is jumping out at me." Corina added, "I hate to say this but we have had challenges with every school she's been in.

Unfortunately, each school had their own issues. All the schools. Particularly the administration is having trouble implementing gifted education. There is a serious problem. Now the teachers are great." Colin adds, "It's like there's a disconnect."

When asked about a challenging experience, Corina discusses the funding issues for gifted education stating, "Here's the problem the state of Colorado and their funding for gifted is somehow not separated out of the general school budget. So, what we experienced is we were promised a gifted magnet classroom and we had it for a year and then it was announced that we no longer had that and it was taken away. Then the kids were displaced, and we had to find new schools for them so that has been the challenge. I think the solution is that the budget needs to be a separate line like special education, but the state hasn't done it and that's why we're having a problem a lot of the times with the administration." Colin agrees that money is an issue. While schools are getting funding for gifted students, schools are not utilizing the money to support the needs of gifted students. Schools were promising differentiated instruction and it never occurred because there was a lack of money in the budget for gifted students.

When asked if there was anything else they would like to share, Colin explained, "It really feels like money is the most important factor to the administration as to why they

are doing what they're doing rather than what is in the interest for each individual child.” Corina says, “I have one for you. There was a problem where the kids were not being certified. The Black and Latino kids were not being certified by the gifted coordinators. They were passing the magnet testing, but the gifted coordinator was not completing the portfolio or sending data to the state to identify the students as gifted. We noticed that they did not certify those kids until they fired the gifted coordinator. They waited until the gifted program was ended to certify the Black and Latino students as gifted. Without being certified, you don't get an ALP so they don't get real services.”

Emergent Themes

Parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students are all too often misunderstood in the educational system (Ford & Grantham, 1997). Many factors contribute to this misunderstanding. The researcher began this project highlighting many of the possible outside influences that may affect parenting of a traditionally marginalized gifted student as shown in the figure below.

Figure 2:

Potential Influences on Traditionally Marginalized Parents of Gifted Children



As

Figure 2

Clandinin (2013) states, “In narrative inquiry we try to understand the stories under or on the edge of stories lived and told, as no story stands on its own but rather in relation to many others.” After analyzing and better understanding the lived experiences of the seven participants, the researcher found many common themes which influence the

parenting of a traditionally marginalized gifted student. The chart below represents those themes.

Figure 3:

Potential Influences on Traditionally Marginalized Parents of Gifted Children



Figure 3

Lack of Educational Resources

Six out of the seven participants shared that they have struggled to find adequate resources to fulfil their child's educational needs. Carla, who is in the educational field herself, discussed how providing opportunities and resources which have been denied to traditionally marginalized gifted students would make all the difference in their success. Carla also noted that, "For a Mexican immigrant family to send their kids to college is like you (White families) sending your kid to the moon. It's a totally new, unknown frontier." Again, highlighting the lack of access to educational resources for minority families.

Corina and Colin discussed how finding support in schools to ensure that their child is getting the best education has been challenging. Corina and Colin have spent countless hours on their own making sure that their child continues to be interested in education. "Basically, it was a constant struggle to find activities that were challenging. It became so challenging that we finally just began purchasing homeschooling curricula and activities on top of her extracurriculars to keep her interested in academics." Corina and Colin also discuss the lack of resources that the schools have for gifted students. "I hate to say this, but we've had challenges with every school she's been in. Unfortunately, each school had its own issues. Particularly, the administration is having trouble implementing gifted. It almost seems like some of the administration feels like the students should be in normal classes and don't need to be accelerated or treated in a different manner or taught in a different manner. "It's like there's a disconnect." When asked about a challenging experience, Corina discusses the funding issues for gifted education stating, "Here's the

problem the state of Colorado and their funding for gifted is somehow not separated out of the general school budget. So, what we experienced is we were promised a gifted magnet classroom and we had it for a year and then it was announced that we no longer had that and it was taken away. Then the kids were displaced, and we had to find new schools for them so that has been the challenge. I think the solution is that the budget needs to be a separate line like special education, but the state hasn't done it and that's why we're having a problem a lot of the times with the administration." Colin agrees that money is an issue. While schools are getting funding for gifted students, schools are not utilizing the money to support the needs of gifted students. Schools were promising differentiated instruction and it never occurred because there was a lack of money in the budget for gifted students. When asked if there was anything else they would like to share, Colin explained, "It really feels like money is the most important factor to the administration as to why they are doing what they're doing rather than what is in the interest for each individual child."

When Emily's daughter was recommended for gifted services in Kindergarten, Emily shared that she was not even aware they could identify at such an early age. Emily shared that she went to the Gifted and Talented teacher at her child's school and was told that they would not be able to do anything for her daughter until she was in third grade. Emily explained, "So, I had to learn that there is a chain of command and just because one person refuses to help your child, you can go to an advocacy committee. That actually got me into GSAC was realizing you know, I wanted to know that not only my

kids but every kid in Colorado had the same opportunity and so I was going to try to take it as high as I could possibly go.”

Cristal also shared her lack of resources to ensure that her child was getting adequate education. Cristal stated, “It was hard getting her formally identified, she was identified in 5th grade. She was bilingual, she had to get out of her English Language learner before. I was lucky to have colleagues. To speed up the process.” Cristal also shared that she did not have any resources, she had to read to discover the opportunities that were available for her daughter. Cristal explained that with her new knowledge, she was also able to better her parenting. In addition, Cristal went into education and has made it her mission to share information and resources with traditionally marginalized gifted families.

Jessica also shared her frustration with the lack of resources. Jessica explained that she has never felt supported as a parent trying to figure out how to help her children. “Finding the resources that I need, that’s been difficult because I don’t know where to look. I didn’t even realize that I could get him tested until one of my friends mentioned that. And I’m like, how did you guys know about it? And I don’t. But it’s like there’s some secret knowledge that they know that I don’t. It’s heartbreaking and it’s frustrating because I feel like I don’t know where to go to get help for them. I had to do research just to find out and it’s hard because I want to help them, but I don’t know where to go and I feel frustrated. And I feel like I’m not a good parent when I see them struggling with certain things that I know that they should be able to get help for. They’re doing better.

I've had to advocate for them a lot and it's my role as a parent, but I didn't even know how to do that."

Finally, Rhonda also experienced the frustration of obtaining resources for her gifted child. Rhonda explained, "Another thing that I have experienced is it just feels as though if we want it, as parents of marginalized, traditionally marginalized, we have to go outside of the school system and get it. We want extra math, we want extra science, if we want extra enriching activities, we have to go seek that out."

Teacher Bias and Underestimation of Traditionally Marginalized Gifted Students

Through the interview process, five of the seven parents discussed teacher bias and underestimation of traditionally marginalized gifted students. Carla expressed that she felt her son was immediately judged by his last name. Carla stated, "You know there's a lot of Latinos nowadays where we have more of a mixed label on our names and so I think a lot of the bias comes from recognizing the surname as being Latino or Mexican origin, and so that sometimes initiates the bias for students." Carla goes on to explain that her and her son are able to easily "blend in" because they are mostly "White looking." Carla shares, "I don't think he experienced a lot of the discrimination because of his skin color that other students and other friends did." Carla goes on to reflect on the how she felt when her son was going into his middle and high school years. "I knew that I had to start watching out for him a little bit more in middle school and high school." Working in education for over 30 years, Carla has come to realize the bias that many teachers carry and has vowed to change that. Carla shared, "And the reason I am a teacher is because I want to make sure that students have access to the best educational

opportunities and all students, not just the students that always get the privileges.” Carla went on to explain that though she pushed for her son to have opportunities, “There is that institutional racism, nonetheless. When you have seven or eight teachers, you’re going to have a bad apple here and there. And it’s so damaging to kids.” Carla also shared a time her son had to deal with bias and negative behavior. She explained how she had been pushing her son so he could be on track to attend a local university. During an incident with a teacher at school, the teacher told her he was not university material. Carla stated, “That teacher totally undermined the whole purpose of my parenting for 15 years of my life when he says it was okay that my son didn’t have to be university material. That is so, so typical, biased, and racist.” Carla continued to share, “People don’t realize the importance of who we are as a culture, as a community and so they have low expectations. And as communities are becoming more diverse, we really need to wise up. They really need to learn about other communities besides their own, and the whole idea of assimilation is not only a detriment to the community, but it is pretty much unethical to have to ask somebody to give up their language and culture for the benefit of a concept of being American, which is false.” Finally, Carla shared the fears she had as mother for the safety of her child. “There was always that fear that they do something wrong and then they can get in trouble, especially in high school, especially with teachers that are racist or are biased or discriminatory. So, there’s a lot of attention to how they behave and what they do. We don’t have the luxury of doing whatever.”

Corina and Colin also shared issues within their school district. “There was a problem where the kids were not being certified by the gifted coordinators , so they were

passing the test, but the gifted coordinator was not sending their data to the state for them to be certified. They weren't completing the portfolios. So, what'll happen is that they put you in the magnet class but they won't actually get you certified. And that's another problem, because if the children aren't certified at state, the school doesn't get funding for them, even though they're magnet eligible. If you're not certified, you don't get any help either. Which means they don't get any real services."

When Emily spoke about her experiences. She stated, "It was difficult to get them identified or even considered by the gifted program there or the TAG teacher there. So, all of my kids are Hispanic and American Indian. And so, for those reasons, I found it a little bit more difficult for people to take them seriously as students or academically."

Jessica also spoke about her experiences with teacher bias and underestimation of her children while in school. Jessica explained, "My older son looks a lot more like me and I definitely feel that when things go wrong in the classroom, when there is conflict or things, it always felt like they were taking the other kids side like they valued the other child's input more than my son's and my son is horrible. Jessica also shared that she felt her son was constantly getting called out for his misbehavior. She said, "Instead of looking for an answer, they just assumed they were being naughty." Jessica explained that she had a friend who had similar behavior concerns and the school was willing to address the behaviors with the special education department. She said, "They really even didn't think about that with my kids'." In discussing her child's first school Jessica made note about the population the school served, "I think they were 95% black and brown students and they spent a lot of time bringing students just up to the grade level they need

to be. Which is amazing, I'm glad that there's a school that they do that. But I was afraid that my son was going to get overlooked or seen as a troublemaker if he's bored." Jessica shared further frustrations about her schools lack of willingness to help her when she was concerned that her son had dyslexia. She explained that she had to collect background evidence in order to make a case for her son to receive extra services. Jessica also described her son's experience with speech therapy. She stated that at one of her previous schools, the speech therapist would send homework for her son as extra support. When she brought it up to her current speech therapist, she said, "We didn't know if it would get done. I'm like so you're saying because we're brown, you think the homework you sent home for speech, I wouldn't see value in that. They didn't say that, but that's what it felt like. You know, all because it's not going to get done if you send it home because I don't see the value in it. Jessica continued to explain that she would see other student who were given special awards and privileges and her students were never offered the same opportunities. Jessica shared that she felt students were awarded those opportunities because their parents had access to information that she did not. She said her children often get upset when they miss opportunities. She gave an example about the musical ensemble at school. She explained that her son wanted a solo in the performance. She asked the teacher about a private music session as some of the other students had received so that he could also audition for the solo part. She said her calls went unanswered, she did not hear back from the teacher and her son was not able to perform as a soloist.

Finally, Rhonda shared her experiences with bias educators. Rhonda begins by explaining that she has never felt validated as a parent of a traditionally marginalized gifted student. She stated, “It’s almost as if the experts in the room know more than you about your child or children. And they’re going to pretty much do what they already planned on doing anyway. And they say that they’re getting your input just so that they can check off a box that says we got some input.” Rhonda explained that her son who is fourth grade had already been suspended 17 times since he started kindergarten. When discussing the teachers, she has encountered, she stated, “I feel that they do have teachers who believe they can do it. And they do have teachers who think that they are a token. And so I said, you’re going to have to learn to navigate between those people. There are people who believe in you and there are people who think you’re just there to fill some sort of quota or something and that you don’t belong there, you don’t deserve to be there. When asked about a positive experience Rhonda has had with an educator, Rhonda shared, “That is so sad, I can’t really think of one. I can think of a quote from my child. “They don’t respect me, why would I respect them?”

Lack of Affective Support

Carla, Cristal, Jessica, Rhonda, Corina, and Colin each voiced their frustration with the lack of affective support and/or resources that their child was given. Carla began by sharing that her son was an underachiever. She discussed how he was very sensitive and had displayed many of the intensities that so many gifted children experience. She said that these intensities caused, “A big problem with one of his language arts teachers, a male teacher who was very oppressive.” Carla also discussed asynchronous development.

“The thing that’s complicated about gifted students is a synchronous development. Where he’s very advanced intellectually, but then social emotionally he doesn’t know how to handle things.” Carla compared her son’s drive with her own speaking to how resilient she was and how she wanted to prove others wrong by getting straight A’s. She described her son as the opposite saying, “He kind of just said screw you and I ain’t doing it.” Carla says again, “I’m so driven, it’s just difficult to see how my son is not motivated. In regard to resources, Carla shared “In the emotional aspect, I think that we didn’t have any resources or support there.” She also pointed out, “And now it’s like you just really have to focus on the social-emotional needs of kids because as a society, we’re just so screwed in so many ways right now, and every is just so difficult.” Carla also discusses how challenging it can be to have a child who is so cognizant and intellectual yet socially immature. Lastly, Carla shared the impact that the Covid pandemic had on her son. In two separate accounts Carla recalled, “The pandemic was really hard on him, and he was very isolated. I think he even got some depression.” Reflecting once again on her son’s intensities during the Covid pandemic, Carla shared, “I’ve also been very, very scared because of his sensitivities. I was scared a little bit when he fell into some depression, where he wasn’t bathing or anything like that, he was isolated. I was concerned about suicide.”

Corina and Colin also shared their frustration with the lack of affective support. “I think there’s not a lot of support. When your child is gifted and they skip a grade and they’re now interacting with children who are older, there’s not a lot of support there.” They continued, “In terms of social-emotional she’s not so good at dealing with kids.”

Corina and Colin further explained that they put their child in a private school for gifted children. After their child had already skipped a grade, the school wanted Corina and Colin to put their child back into a class with her same-aged peers. “They wanted her to interact with her peers, but they didn’t support it. She needed to be challenged academically.” Corina and Colin explained, “That failed miserably, we tried to explain to them this was not going to work because the material that the children were doing was far too easy. And that’s where we really had the trouble.”

Cristal explained that when her daughter was younger, prior to being identified as gifted, she had a lot of trouble with separation. She shared, “She was in third or fourth grade, her teachers really didn’t understand that right? They reprimanded her a lot and it was like in a shameful way. Like you are so big, why are you crying for your mom? Like she’s right here. Everything’s okay.” Cristal also shared that her daughter often got labeled as laze because she would often daydream in class.

Next, Jessica shared how her family has no issue showing emotions. She explained, “We’re very touchy, my family has always been. We hug, you know, and we love on each other. Like Corina and Colin, it was suggested to Jessica that her son stay in a grade lower than he should, “Their reasoning wasn’t because they didn’t think he couldn’t handle the material or anything like that. It was because they thought he was not emotionally mature enough.” She explained that one of her sons often feels isolated and alone. Jessica went on to share how her son was eventually placed on an IEP, in his plan, it stated that he could take breaks when needed. Jessica recalled a time that her son was very upset and crying. She said her son’s teacher sent him out of the room as a form of

punishment which upset him even more. “She took advantage of the thing that was supposed to be a safe place for him and turned it into a punishment because she didn’t like that.”

Rhonda also shared stories about her son’s intensities. Rhonda explains, “The more I learn about these overexcitabilities and intensities, I start to feel, oh, that what it is. It’s intense, it’s draining.” Rhonda continued, “My son has had nothing but challenging interactions. It hinders his giftedness because his processing speed is slower. But he’s missing all this instructional time. He’s missing exposure to algebra. He is missing exposure to debates and stuff like that because the focus since kindergarten has been on his behavior.” Rhonda also expressed her frustration with the labels that the schools have placed on her son, “The way his behavior represents us or the way they see his behavior representing us, they don’t see it as overexcitabilities or just being intense, they see it as oppositional defiant. You are oppositional defiant. That’s all you are, that’s all you’ll ever be.” Just as other parents have shared, it was also recommended that Rhonda hold her son back, “Then the other issue is letting people dictate to me what should happen with my son. Well, you know, he’s a male, and you know they don’t mature as fast as, you should probably hold him back because he’s going to be in high school with 15-year olds and he’s only going to be 13.”

Influence of Parent Struggles

Six of the seven parents interviewed expressed how their own struggles within the educational system motivated them to make sure their children had more opportunities. Carla, who grew up in the San Luis Valley, explained that her environment was very

segregated. Carla shared that Mexicans in her area were often referred to as “dirty Mexicans” and she was often called a “wet back.” She explained how difficult her life was growing up. She spoke about looking forward to going to school because that is where she got her meals. “School was like, what’s the word I’m looking for? My safety, my refuge, my sanctuary. My father was an alcoholic and verbally abusive. We had a very dysfunctional family out of extreme poverty. And when I went to school, I just loved learning so much and of course the teachers loved me because I was the nerdy kid and always did everything right. I didn’t cause any problems and I was very afraid to cause any problems in school because I didn’t want to have any issues with my parents.” Carla explains, “I developed a perfectionist complex at a very young age. I just decided I needed to get straight A’s like I had to get a scholarship and to get out of poverty.” Carla continues, “I was like one of or the only Mexican that graduated in my class. There were some Chicano students. The Chicano students are the ones that have been there. Their families have been in the valley since the Spanish had occupied the area. So, they were actually probably there before the white settlers came. But I was part of the new immigrants, and we were very, very mistreated.” Carla who has blue eyes and blonde hair said at times she hated how she blended in with the “little blondie girls.” Carla shares, “So I kind of grew up with the whole idea of internalized oppression, which I found out later when I took some Mexican-American studies.” Carla said, “It took me a long time to understand that the system was set up and the system is going to push me out, the system failed me and I didn’t get the support that I needed.” Carla went on to describe how her experiences differed from those of her son. “I’m so driven, it’s just

difficult to see how my son is not motivated.” Carla explains, “He hasn’t developed social maturity as an only child that has not suffered from extreme poverty like I did, and my husband did. He’s been very pampered, I would say. And also, it’s protected from a lot of that trauma around economic disadvantage. And so, he kind of intellectually understands what we’re talking about, but he hasn’t suffered as much.” Carla explains how she tried to give her son opportunities and gave him everything on a “silver platter.” “He has a lot more guidance on the opportunities, he’s had a lot more opportunities than I have.” Carla explains that she tried to be sure that her son had access to advanced courses “Which doesn’t always happen to the Mexican kids or the kids of color.” Carla shares how that did not work for her son, “I’ve had to learn to be hands off and give him space, let him make his own mistakes and learn from his mistakes. Which is really hard because my husband and I had such a hard life that we were trying to really be overprotective and over controlling with good intentions.” Carla continued, “They start, you know becoming more independent, then you have to reflect on your own self and your parenting and who you are and what you are doing and why you want what you want.”

Corina and Colin grew up in the same San Francisco area. Corina shared that she attended a predominantly White public school. “When my parents divorced, I ended up moving to San Francisco and going to a predominantly black middle school and high school. And I learned pretty quickly that I was way for advanced, basically I just had to sit there and be bored.” Corina continued to explain that she ultimately had to retake her high school courses at a junior college because her academics were so bad. Colin shared that though he was identified as gifted, “They didn’t really have a plan for what to do

with me or what to do with all the gifted kids. When I got to high school, it was a joke.” Colin explained that the services he received did get better before he graduated, but “A lot of the kids checked out.” When asked how their experience differs from their daughter, they shared, “I would say that she’s been in environment with gifted children and neither one of us. She’s been with gifted children almost all the way. That is a completely different situation from what I went through, where they were just questioning if I was even gifted. And then finally when I was tested, I was identified as gifted so that’s completely different. And I think we did that intentionally, and we didn’t want any similarities to our experiences in schooling. And so, we made sure that she did not have those kinds of experiences that we had.”

Emily discussed how she attended a low economic school where her mother taught. It was at that school where Emily was identified as gifted. When her mother moved districts to teach at a new school, Emily followed. At her new school, Emily encountered teachers who questioned her giftedness. A teacher told Emily that though she may have been gifted at her old school she was not gifted at her new school, and they put her in ESL classes. This made Emily doubt her abilities. “Okay, maybe I’m not gifted. Maybe it was just because I was in district 0 and the poor kids made me seem gifted. You know, and like this caused an internal struggle within me.” Emily goes on to share that her teachers thought her parents were doing the work for her. She shared one of her teachers had her handwrite a report 6 times because, “She thought my parents were doing it for me. And that there’s no way that some little Mexican kid from district 0 could be completing work at this level and I struggled with that.” Not only did Emily struggle

with the teachers in school, but she also struggled to fit in with her peers. I was being bullied for being one of the only Mexicans in the district. I was actually referred to as the Mexican cheerleader because there was only one on the entire squad and it was me.”

Emily also said that she felt she was, “Too white for the Mexicans and I’m too Mexican for the white kids.” This caused Emily to struggle with her academic performance. “I was ahead but I didn’t want to be ahead, and I didn’t want to be seen as, you know, better than anybody. And so yes, it was quite a struggle. So, it’s been something that I’ve really tried hard not to repeat with my children. You know that they can find their tribe and that they can, you know, have their social-emotional needs filled as well as their academic needs.

When asked to share her own experiences in the educational system, Jessica began, “Well, my own experience sucked.” Jessica continued to explain how her teachers discouraged her interest in math and science. She stated, “I had to fight to be allowed to be in algebra or to be in an advanced Language Arts. And I definitely didn’t go about it in a good way, but I didn’t know what I was doing.” Jessica added, referring to her teachers “I see you taking these other people out and you’re putting them in these advanced classes. I’m like, so why don’t I get to go with them? They were like, well, we just don’t know if we’re ready for it. I’m like, well, I think I am, and why don’t you put me in there?” Jessica struggled to understand why some students received special privileges knowing that she was just as capable but had to stay behind. She shared that she had to fight “tooth and nail” to get the education she deserved. She said her mother was supportive, but “She didn’t know that to do.” So, Jessica became her own advocate.

Jessica also recalled a science teacher she had in high school, “He didn't bother remembering any of the names of his female students. Well, that's not true, his female students of color because he called all the Asian and Japanese girls, Lisa, because that was the first name he learned. He called all of the Latina girls Jessica because that was the first name he learned. The boys got their own names and like the white girls, all got their names recognized.”

Like Emily, Jessica also struggled to fit in with her peers. She stated that she felt very out place and to this day feels like she experiences imposter syndrome. Jessica shared, “I was bullied for being smart or I was bullied for being whitewashed because I don't speak Spanish. I got it on both ends. So, it was a frustrating experience.”

When asked how her experience differs from her children's, Jessica stated that she is able to better advocate for them. Drawing on her own educational experience Jessica recalls, “They (her parents) didn't know there were things that they could have done for me when I was even smaller. But I'm not blaming them, and no one offered things to them or talked to them about stuff.” Jessica continued to share when she was growing up, she heard phrases like, “I thought all Mexicans were stupid”. Jessica explained that her kids do not have to deal with that. When referring to issues that have arose in her children's school, Jessica recognizes that she may often feel that they are being biased because of her own background and experiences. Jessica shares, “So I don't know if it was just discriminatory or intentionally or even unintentionally. But it just feels like when you bust somebody repeatedly and the things that you ask for, you don't hear back from. It's frustrating. And I feel like they can feel that frustration.”

Monica also shared her own struggles with her education. She explained how her mom had to work from “sun to sun.” Monica shares, “She couldn't get as much time to my education as I wished. So, yeah, I didn't feel that I had been challenged a lot of for my education.” When asked about the similarities and differences between her own experiences and those of her daughter, Monica said, “I think it's not similar at all. As I'm saying, my parents have had to work from sun to sun, you know, to pay the bills and to put food on my table. And, you know, it was just different. And as of now, you know, my kids, I think they have, you know, we're not rich, but we're not struggling.”

Finally, Rhonda shares her experiences as a gifted African American. Rhonda attended a school for gifted students which was outside her neighborhood. The school she was bused to was predominately white and her neighborhood was predominantly Black. Rhonda recalled, “I remember the income gradient, the houses getting bigger as you travel from my neighborhood to Southeast Denver. I also remember them having activities after school for the community school, of which I didn't really feel part of the community because if I wasn't on the activity bus, I had to get myself on that regular bus. My parents did not have the time or extra gas money or anything, if I missed that bus. So anyway, I just remember a few things like that. And of course, I remember being one of the few African American kids in a lot of the classes, but I made friends, I made friends of all colors and I had like my neighborhood set of friends and we would play different games, do different things. And then I had my school set of friends, and when they had parties, I often went to their parties. But I had a couple of friends whose parents didn't feel comfortable bringing them to my parties, my side of town, which was very

interesting. It was in the early 80s and we had Crips and Bloods. And it was just a very interesting code-switching experience. Rhonda also shared, “I wasn't that far removed from my mom's generation and my mom's generation, she was actually at a segregated school in a little town in Louisiana, and she said she felt she got better education there. She felt that even the lunch ladies were invested in the kids in her community. Then when she moved, their family moved up here kind of tail end of the Great Migration, but she said she always felt they were more invested in her education in her small-town school, even though it was segregated. But she said those lunch ladies, they knew your mama, they knew your daddy, they knew where you lived. Everybody in the community would pull together for the sake of the kids, and the segregated school was supposed to be so, you know, deprived and poorly run and poor resources. But she said she got a better foundation there than when they moved up here.”

Lack of Cultural Awareness

Of the seven parents interviewed, six described a lack of cultural awareness within education. To begin, when discussing her son's issues with a teacher Carla explained, “I knew that the teacher was at the root of the issue because of his bias, where there was something going on in the relationship where there was a lack of relationship that was positive. For example, they were doing a unit on like slavery. The kids had to write about their perspective as if they were slaves. So that was extremely inappropriate and something I would never ask a child to do. Obviously, as an educator, it's very inappropriate. And of course, my son refused to do it. And not only my son, but other kids in the class refused to do that assignment.”

Carla also shared that she does believe that there are a lot of good teachers with good intentions but would like to see more teachers of color. Explaining that though it is rare, it is important for students to see educators of color. In light of the social justice issues, Carla also addresses the matter of equity, stating, “You know, for us, equity is a matter of life and death.” When asked if there was anything else she would like to share Carla explains, “I think the biggest issue is just racism, especially the whole idea that people, you know, when you say Mexican, everybody thinks it's like some bad word. It was definitely used as a bad word for a dirty Mexican, lazy Mexican. It was all of those biases. But when I say I'm Mexican, it's my nationality, it's a country. Mexico is a country. If you're from Mexico, you're Mexican. Mexican is not a bad word. It is a nationality of people that have a very proud heritage of centuries of an ancient culture and a very prosperous, prosperous nation. Right now, even though we have serious drug problems because of this country consuming so many drugs. So being bilingual and being bicultural is really important to us. I think that's something that, you know, in the whole history of racism where we're forced to assimilate Mexicans always fight that and refuse to assimilate.

Carla also raises the question, “How is this system supposed to be set up to also ensure that marginalized people, first generation students have the support they need to be successful? Carla continued, “Schools really need to continue on their goal of educating children and have the high goals and access for everybody. But how does that look like for, you know, for all communities? Does it look the same? There's different things that you need to do to connect to the family. There's different things that you need

to deal with to provide the resources to mediate the opportunities. So, you have to function differently. You can't keep doing the same thing over and over and expect different results. So, you have to really transform education to engage every family and respect every family. There's this myth about what education is supposed to produce, right? Public education is social stratification, so it continues to produce exactly what we want it to produce. And so, it is failing hundreds and hundreds of families every year."

When Cristal was asked if there was anything more she would like to share, she responded, "Not as a mother, but as an educator, I work at a bilingual school and a dual language school, and I think that our percentage of gifted kids is very high, but our ID percentage is very low. And I also think it's because our families in our community need that information because we see giftedness presented in many other different ways just because of our culture. Because of our culture, we see giftedness with other lenses, right? Maybe disrespectful when kids want to have their own voice and things like that. So, I believe we should all have this mission of just sharing all the information we can about this."

Emily shared stories of a lack of cultural awareness not only within the school, but also within her children's peers. Emily described the incident, "One of her peers in first grade told her to go back to her country, and she tried to explain that, you know, she's first nation, that she's American Indian, and that her roots are deeper in this current territory than those of her peers." Emily also shared, "We celebrate King's Day, and she was trying to explain to her peers why she was really excited about that. And one of her

peers who was Jehovah's Witness, doesn't celebrate any holidays, but told her why it was dumb that Mexicans try to make up holidays and stuff like that.”

As far as the lack of cultural awareness in teachers, Emily explained, “One of the things that is challenging is my son, since they're Native American, my son has his hair grown out, so his hair is a little past his shoulder. Well, about three months ago, he got a comment from the other kindergarten teacher, not his kindergarten teacher, basically saying that his hair looks sloppy. There was a meme going around about how, you know when your child starts school the first day of school, their hair is like pretty, and then they come home, and it looks like they've been through a war. And so, the kindergarten teachers were talking about how that's how he looked all the time because his hair was long and curly. So, and then some of his friends were calling him a girl or she for a long time because of his long hair and because of his braid, because most of the time he wears it in a braid, but sometimes he wears it down. And so, I think it would be important for me for the school to learn about their culture. Not just American Indian culture, but also the Hispanic culture. Like yesterday, my daughter had to explain to the entire Spanish class because she's the Mexican kid what Three Kings Day is. And so. You know, she enjoys being in the spotlight, but it's also a little bit isolating when your teacher is like, hey, since you're Mexican, you explain what this holiday is like, you know? So, I think just kind of that cultural appreciation rather than isolation would be one thing I want the kids' school to know.”

Cristal shared that it was difficult for her to get her daughter identified as gifted. Stating that the school would not identify her daughter as gifted until she was out of her

English Language Learner classes. Cristal's daughter was not formally identified until she was in 5th grade because she was an English Language Learner.

Jessica shares multiple stories which address the lack of cultural awareness in education. Jessica begins, "I don't speak Spanish, not fluently, but I've always tried to teach my kids the little bit that I know." Jessica's younger son is twice exceptional and sees a teacher to support his speech. Jessica was frustrated that the speech teacher said, "He needs to focus on learning his primary language first." Jessica said she did just that on the advice of the speech teacher and after researching the issue in depth she realized, "Well, that's just ridiculous."

Jessica is Latina and her husband is white. Jessica shared, "You know, like I feel like they get all kinds of. Input from my husband's side. And I feel like they're encouraged to reject my culture and the stuff from my parents, from my side." Jessica shared that her culture and her background also need to be respected. Jessica also shared, "I don't even go to PTA meetings because it's uncomfortable. When I do go, I'm generally the only person of color there, and I feel like nothing I say is really heard. So, like when they want to increase fees on something. I'm like, well, OK, but we have to think about this like, you know, why do we keep adding more things that people have to pay to do? Because that's not fair to the rest of the population, because not everybody can afford the extra 20 dollars for that. Like sometimes 20 dollars for some people is the difference between getting to eat a meal on a couple of days or not. And so, they're not going to be able to do that. And I feel like that's completely ignored when I say things like that."

Jessica shared another interaction, “For example, like, well, there was somebody who they didn't even think they were racist. They said some kind of racist comment about all these dirty Mexicans or whatever. And they're like, Well, but you're different to me, not you. I wasn't talking about, you know, but they don't care about education or whatever. But obviously, you know, well, I'm not an isolated incident. I want people to understand and know that. There's a spectrum of people in every race. You know, just because you're one race doesn't mean you're automatically smart or automatically stupid, or that you're just somewhere in between. There's a range of people in all races and I think that range of people, whether you're at the high end or the low end deserves the support to do well in school because right now I feel like all we support is the middle.”

When asked what she would like her child's school to know about her family, Jessica explained, “My children and me with our family, we come from a very mixed background. And my values, like how I was raised, my culture isn't necessarily the same as everybody else's, but nobody is. And that we really value education. And we really want to participate, and we love helping. We really value helping other people. But we also need to feel valued.” Jessica also discussed how she would like students to be taught more culturally relevant history. Jessica continued, “Yes, we are intelligent and we're loud and outspoken. But that doesn't mean that we can't be marginalized.” Jessica also explained that she would like to have her feelings validated. “People think that I'm just, you know. I'm just saying we're being treated differently because it's like the trend or people just want to call out racism or whatever, and I'm like, I'm not going through life

with a chip on my shoulder. We're loving, caring people. We love school. We love the people. We value the time educators put in.”

When Rhonda was asked if there was anything she would like for her child’s school to know about her family, Rhonda responded, “I would like my child's school to know about our family. That we are not that family that has got all the drama going on. Our gifted child brings us just as much, intensity and fatigue over that intensity, as he brings them. We have values. We value education. Rhonda continued, “But what I wish they knew about us is. I love to read. I love podcasts. I love to grow. I love to see my family grow, my children grow. I like to see critical thinkers, I want to raise thinkers, not just, yes people.”

Rhonda also shared that she believes the school thinks that she has a chaotic home and that is the reason why her child has behavioral issues. She explained she feels as though the school thinks she does not value education, “because if you did, he would be more respectful toward the staff. The loving, kind staff that is trying to educate him and he'd be more appreciative of the opportunities that he's afforded by being in this gifted program.”

Rhonda said she also wishes that her child’s school understood that it is a struggle for them to just get to school. She also noted that there are often unfair assumption made in schools, “And the things they take for granted, like when you walk into a room and you're white or you're Asian, people already assume that you're smart when you walk into a room and you're black or Latino, people assume either you just barely squeaked by in there or you're there to fill some sort of quota. Or if you're like the Barack Obamas of the

world and you're the best of the best that your community has to offer, then you can't have any other kind of problems. You can't have any substance abuse problems. You can't have any problems with overexcited ability or intensity because you're supposed to be perfect. So, I also wish they knew that it's possible to be twice exceptional, it's possible for somebody to have really fast processing and be really creative and then still struggle with, self-esteem issues, because they don't ever see anybody who looks like them. They don't ever see anybody who, who's doing something positive with their gifts. You know, on TV, on social media, in class among the staff, and they just have to go back and forth on that school bus with that backpack all by themselves every day. So that's what I wish they knew. Instead of just saying. Well, hey, buddy. I've never done anything wrong to you. Why are you treating me so badly, so disrespectfully? Maybe, especially if you're gifted, maybe the sense of rage that that you feel when you look around and see how unfair things are, maybe that even gets to you and overcomes you before you even have a chance to verbalize what it is you're feeling.”

Rhonda continues to address the inequities in gifted education noting that there are gifted black and brown kids out there, but “Because of the way the system treats them, some of them morph into people pleasers. They fly under the radar because they really don't care about the gifted label, who cares? Some of them are real angry because they don't know how to really process all the unfairness that they perceive. I mean, there's the real unfairness in the world, and then they got their own little perceived injustice layered on top of that. And they might present as very angry. The ones with more self-control might present as checked out, because they're just like, this is bigger than I care to

deal with right now. I just want a date to prom. I don't really care. But in the long run. These are minds that are going to shape the future of law and health care and solve our environment problems. So, whatever we can do to help dial them back in. I think that's really, really critical right now. And stop pretending as though they don't exist because the metrics say they don't exist. They might start out like life is like a brilliant, bright, bright burning white light, but then they hit the prism of the public school system and they just fracture and slow. So, I guess what I want to say is let's start early enriching and encouraging and teaching kids about themselves and their learning style. Not teaching them that they're better than anybody else but teaching them that they have purpose and that we need them.

Rhonda ended her interview on a very powerful note, explaining that when students are testing with the CogAT in second and sixth grades, many students do not care about the test. "They're like, and what is that going to do? So, I test as gifted. What is that really going to change for me and my community? In this crazy world that's murdering black men and all this, what is that really going to do? So, I would like for them to know like there really is a reason and a purpose for them and they can really help and they can use their platform to help. And then, I guess just, be a little more open to the different ways of being gifted, you might have a kid who doesn't have that CogAT score, but have you heard their music? Have you seen their art? Have you watched them navigate between cultures? Impressive. You know, I guess that's all. I just wish I could go back and do it over for my kids."

Parent Involvement

It is clear that the Covid-19 pandemic had a dramatic effect on the level of parent involvement in their children's schools. Four of the seven parents interviewed discussed being highly involved in their child's education. Corina began by sharing that her and Colin have a very hands-on approach. Colin shared, "I literally would go on the campus and talk to the teacher, hey, what's going on? What can I do? What does she need help with? Keeping my finger directly on the pulse. Unfortunately, with COVID restrictions being what they are, it makes it very hard because any kind of communication has to be either email or phone calls or something, you know, or some kind of specific meeting time. It makes it very difficult."

Emily shared that though her child was identified gifted, she was told she could not get services until she was in third grade. Emily described how she immediately took action, "One person refuses to help your child, you can go to an advocate and advocacy committee. So that actually got me into GSOC was realizing that I wanted to make sure that not just my own kids, but that every kid in Colorado had the same opportunity. And so, I was going to try and take it as high as I could possibly go."

When asked to describe her level of involvement, Jessica responded, "I would say very high. But I try really, really hard not to be a lawnmower parent, I want her to, I want all of my kids to experience their own obstacles and try to take some problem-solving steps"

Jessica continued, "So I was their room mom. So, I actually ended up being vice president of their PTA at their first school, came to their other school, I'm on their Parent

Accountability Committee there, and I have gone to the district and to the regional gifted like different seminars or different instructions that they have put on. And then I actually joined the Education State Advisory Committee, so that I can also try and advocate for not just my children, but other children in their district experiencing similar situations as them to be kept into consideration when the school board is making their decision.”

Jessica shared that she is involved in her children’s school but often feels isolated. She explained that she feels the school views her differently since becoming more intensely involved. “It’s like they see me differently because I am intensely involved, but they shouldn’t have to be the case. You know? Because if I was working, I wouldn’t have the time.”

Jessica also shares about her pre-pandemic involvement. “Before the pandemic, I knew every teacher in there, even though my kids have not had every teacher. Definitely, before the pandemic, they all knew who I was, and I knew them, and I know a lot of the kids, I know a lot of the other parents, and I’m pretty involved.

When Jessica was able to volunteer at her child’s school, she did encounter some bias. Jessica recalled that when she would go in, the teacher never had anything for her to do. They would tell her they were not expecting her and they were at capacity. She said they often turned her away. When she was able to stay, Jessica said her role was more of an observer. After speaking to other parents Jessica found out that other parents were experiencing something completely different. “They come into class and they let them come into class regularly, like they’re invited to come into class regularly and, you know,

when they do show up, they're like, oh, well, let's do a reading group. So, then this person can involve themselves in this.”

When asked about her level of involvement, Monica shared, “I’d say 100 percent.” Monica then gave a specific example. “Like today, I had the orientation for her and like I was there, and I give my number and my email, even my address if they need to come and talk to me. Yeah, I would like to chaperon on field trips. I’d like to be in committees and, you know, from the school, if they need me, you know, I’ll be there. I’ll leave everything for or, you know, for it to be there with whatever they might need.”

Supportive Teachers

Six of the seven parents interviewed shared stories of a positive encounter with a teacher who supported their child and their giftedness. The parents explained how this support increased motivation and feelings of self-worth.

Carla began by describing the positive relationship her son had with his Spanish teacher. “The great thing about having the occasional and rare teacher that is actually a teacher of color or identifies in your own culture is that they will understand you and they will definitely motivate you. So, I think she was very motivational in having high expectations and being demanding, but she was also high support and a very good teacher, a very competent teacher.”

Corina and Colin share that while their daughter attending a magnet school, she had a teacher who was extremely supportive, “She actually would allow the kids to kind of grow into areas that they excelled in. Corina concurred, “Yes, she was phenomenal. She would test the children at the beginning of the school year. And based on those test

results, that would be the curriculum she'd give the children. That was probably the best gifted experience we had.” Colin explained that this particular teacher put together and individualized curriculum based on where the students were.

The couple continued to explain, that their daughter is identified gifted in science, “Which apparently there's not a lot of kids in the state that are certified gifted in science. So, she started contacting other teachers from other schools to give Kathryn some more challenging curriculum.”

Cristal also shared her experience with supportive teachers, “I had a couple of teachers last year that noticed what her strengths and also what she needed to work on for high school to get ready for high school. So, we had a very open conversation with her and my student, initiated by the teacher, where she first highlighted everything, she was good at and then the things she needed to work on, like speaking and participate in a little more speaking class and things like that. So, we worked on a little plan together on how to support her, and it was totally an extra thing she did.”

Emily found supportive teachers when she moved her children into a different school. At their new school Emily explains that they cater to gifted students. The teachers at this school were able to take a negative experience at a previous school and work with Emily’s daughter to build back her confidence. Emily shared, “I care more about what you write down and how you plan and what you are working on than I do about your handwriting because your muscles are not yet developed enough to have really good handwriting at six and seven years old, you know, so even if you tried your very, very hardest.”

Emily shared another example of a supportive teacher with one of her other gifted children explaining that her daughter enjoys writing very dark stories. Instead of discouraging these stories, the teachers pointed out her high level of writing skills. Her teacher also encouraged her to publish her story. This, Emily recalled boasted her daughter's self-confidence.

Jessica shared one final example of her gifted son. Jessica explained that her son loves to come up with games to play. Jessica shared that his games were often advanced and many of the children couldn't play because they did not have his skill level. To avoid kids getting injured, the teacher asked her son if they could come up with a game together. Her son and his teacher came up with a fun game that allowed for him to express his creativity and keep his peers safe. Emily shared, "So that really made his day and made his week. He hasn't stopped talking about it since."

Next, Jessica shared positive interactions her children have had with supportive teachers. Jessica attributes her son getting a proper diagnosis was due to the referral of one specific teacher, "She supported him in that one, it's like, you know, hey, if you need to go sit under the table. That's fine. You're getting your work done. You know, she encouraged these wild and crazy ideas

Jessica also recalled, "They were doing kind of like book reports. But he wanted to go above and beyond like made a game. She encouraged him even after it was done, like when he wanted to show her more that he did with it, you know, because he kept adding to the game and making it more detailed when he read more books in the series, and he added, like more stuff about the rest of the series like sequels. But she always just

encouraged that, like, she supported that and she would look at it and she would, you know, check it and she would grade it, even though it wasn't part of the curriculum because he wanted that, he wanted her to see it and she didn't treat it like it was unimportant.

Finally, Jessica recalled a teacher who was not only supportive but also admitted when she made a mistake. “You know, she values the way his brain thinks, and she makes it clear to him that she does. And like, even at conferences, we're usually the last conference when we go to conferences or even online when we had the online conferences because we'll just sit and talk. Jessica continued to discuss a time when the teacher told her son that he could not listen to music during a test. Jessica had to remind the teacher that the IEP does state her son is allowed to have music while taking the test, “She was like, I'm sorry, I made a mistake. She let him retake it because he didn't feel like he did as best as he could. You know, and she apologized and let him retake it.” Jessica further explained, “Not only is that good just to show kids that, but it's important to be responsible for your actions. But he felt that respect because she told him, you know, I was wrong and you were right, and I apologized and let him redo it. So that was amazing.

Monica shared her experience with a supportive teacher while her daughter was learning remotely. “You know, for Christmas, I bought them a hoverboard. So, she was doing her online school with the hoverboard, you know, all over the house and the computer in front of her. So, she wasn't productive at all.” Monica explained that her teacher challenged her to complete iReady Math and Reading lessons while riding on her

hoverboard. Monica shared that her daughter was excited about the challenge and completed her lessons.

The seven individuals that participated in the study expressed common experiences as they navigated their way through the school system. Most parents interviewed endured hardships and bias in their own education. The participants shared that their own parents were unsure how to help or were unable to support due to working or lack of resources available. Having to struggle with their own education, the parents interviewed were determined to ensure that their own children did have similar experiences.

Personal Experience

As the participants spoke about their own journey within the educational system, the majority of the participants had negative experiences. As noted by Park and Holloway (2013), the parents were also victims of the bias school system. Thus, creating an ongoing mistrust of schools. Carla recalled being referred to as a “dirty Mexican” while growing up in her segregated neighborhood. She found school to be a safe haven and did what she could to earn a scholarship. Carla’s struggles came when she attended college the first time. Carla recalled, “It took me a long time to understand that the system was set up and the system is going to push me out, the system failed me and I didn’t get the support I needed.”

Furthermore, Corina and Colin explained how they both received a poor education and were bored the majority of the time they were in class. Colin explicitly stated that he and his wife worked hard to make sure that their daughter to experience similarities that they had.

Emily recalled teachers questioning her giftedness and having her retake tests because they did not believe she was capable of completing work at such a high level. Emily not only experienced bias from the educators but also from her peers. She recalled that she felt, too white for the Mexicans and too Mexican for the white kids.

When asked about her own experiences in education the Jessica stated, “Well my own experience sucked.” Jessica felt discouraged to explore math and science topics. She also was unable to attend advanced classes which she knew she was more than capable of completing. Jessica also expressed that she suffers from imposter syndrome due to her lack of fitting in with her peers on either side.

Monica shared that her mother and father worked hard while she was in school to be able to pay the bills and have food on the table. Because of this, they were unable to support her in her education. Monica explained that she did not feel challenged in school. Her own experiences drove Monica to advocate and become involved in her children’s education.

Rhonda shared stories of being a gifted African American female being bused outside her neighborhood to attend a gifted school. Rhonda explained that she could not stay for any after school activities because her parents did not have extra gas money to pick her up from the other neighborhood. Rhonda recalled her peers from school not being able to go to her neighborhood and being bullied by the kids who lived in her neighborhood.

The personal experiences of the participants show the hardships and bias that occurs for traditionally marginalized students. These biases not only occur within the educational system but also between peers of different and similar races.

Current Parenting Practices

As noted by Salerno and Fink (1992. p.2) “We cannot look at the school and home in isolation from one another; we must see how they interconnect with each other and with the world at large” Since the majority of the participants in this study experienced hardships while in school. Their current parenting practices aim to shield their children from the same type of obstacles that they faced. In accordance with Wiles (2014) this study also found parenting practices of traditionally marginalized students serve two roles, 1) they constantly direct and redirect the children toward academic achievement and 2) they foster the development of specific habits and qualities of mind that support academic success.

Carla constantly directed and redirected her son toward academic achievement Carla discussed that her son seems to be less motivated toward academics which was very hard for Carla since she saw education as a way out of poverty. Carla explained that she made sure he had access to advanced courses. Carla admits that due to her hard life she was overprotective and controlling but all with good intentions. Once her son was out of high school, Carla finally decided to be more hands off and let her son learn from his mistakes.

Corina and Colin have worked hard to foster their daughter's academic success. They utilize outside resources to continually challenge and engage her both academically and socially.

With her own struggles at the forefront, Emily fosters the development of habits and qualities that support academic success. Emily has multiple children who were identified as gifted. One of her daughters has a tendency to write "dark" stories. Emily stated, instead of shaming her, they encourage her to express herself in a safe way. This ability of self-expression led her daughter to share her story with her teacher and become interested in entering writing competitions. Like Emily, Monica fosters the development of specific habits and qualities of the mind that support academic success by setting her academic expectations for her daughter. Jessica also fosters the development of specific habits while allowing her gifted son to build on his strengths at home.

Cristal and Rhonda direct and redirect their children toward academic achievement. Cristal explained how she was able to work with a teacher who highlighted her daughter's strengths and needs. They were able to utilize that list to create goals. Though Rhonda has had challenging experiences with her gifted son, she explains that she has tried to instill a love of learning in her children. She understands that her son requires extra patience yet, he can easily grasp new concepts when he is shown individually.

As the study found, parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students aim to give their children more opportunities for a successful future than they felt they had. The participants shared how they constantly direct and redirect their children toward

academic achievement or how they foster the development of specific habits and qualities of mind that support academic success Wiles (2014).

School Interactions

Changes within the educational system must begin with the families of minority students (Grantham, 2012). As this study found, traditionally marginalized parents want to be involved in their child's education. While the majority of parents discussed being highly involved in their child's education, others explained that a busy schedule including working and going to school full time hindered parents from being heavily involved in their child's education. This is supported by Ford and Grantham (1997) who explain that minority parents often work multiple jobs and therefore are hard to get in contact with during regular school hours.

Corina and Colin explain that they have a very "hands-on" approach with their daughter's school. They like to have conversations with the teachers to make sure that their daughter is getting everything she needs.

Emily explains that she had to learn the chain of command in order for her child to receive gifted services after early gifted identification. This encouraged Emily to become a part of gifted organizations where she can help not only her children but others who are experiencing similar obstacles.

Jessica shared she also has a high level of involvement in her children's education. Jessica volunteered as the room mom and was on the PTA. As Ford notes (2010) inequities within the school system are brought on by educators, peers, and families. An example of these inequities was shared by Jessica. She explained that she

felt as though she was more of an observer in the classroom and other parents were running reading groups. This made Jessica feel isolated when volunteering at her children's school.

Monica also shared her high level of involvement at her daughter's school noting that she enjoys chaperoning field trips and joining committees. Monica explains that she gives out her number, email, and address so the teachers can find her if they need her.

Though not all of the participants in the study described a high level of involvement in their child's education it is clear that all participants take an interest in their child's academic success. "It is the responsibility of families, schools and society to create a more favorable atmosphere for the full development of all students-including those with outstanding talents" (Coleman & Shah, 2015. p.73)

Summary

The individuals who participated in the study did so in order to have their stories heard. As noted by Jean Clandinin (2013), "Narrative inquiry is inspired by a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially lead storied lives."

Clandinin (2013) goes on to note:

People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful.

The stories told by these individuals paint a picture of what our educational system is like and brings to light the changes that need to occur in order for all students to

have an equal playing field and equal opportunities for a bright future. The participants were able to give insight which helped the researcher gain valuable information to answer the research questions: What are the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized families with a gifted child. The sub-questions that supported the research questions were: (1) What is the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting? (2) What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child? (3) What role did those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

Chapter Five: Discussion and Implications

Exploring the Lives of Parents of Traditionally Marginalized Gifted Students

provided insight to the lived experiences of seven parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. The purpose of this study was to examine the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting. Through the telling of each story, themes emerged and have been analyzed through the Critical Race Theory framework.

Summary of Research Study

After a thorough analysis of the interviews that took place, the researcher developed a diagram to display the outside influences that affect parenting of a traditionally marginalized gifted student. Those influences include, lack of educational resources, teacher bias and underestimation of traditionally marginalized gifted students, lack of affective support for gifted learners, influence of parent struggles, lack of cultural awareness in schools, parent involvement, and the presence of supportive teachers.

With the emergent themes of the study, the researcher was also able to answer the research questions: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices? The sub-questions that supported the research questions were: (1) What are the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting? (2) What role did the parents' personal

experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child? (3) What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

Theoretical Framework

Since the goal of the research was to understand the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students, CRT was utilized as it “Recognizes the experiential knowledge of people of color as legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination” (Yosso et. al., 2009) CRT explicitly listens to the lived experiences of marginalized individuals through counter-storytelling methods. Researchers utilize the CRT in order to tell the realities of minorities living in “racialized societies” (2008, p. 23). The study aimed to lift the voices of minority parents who experienced the bias school system and share how that in turn has affected their parenting practices of their traditionally marginalized gifted child.

As Teitelbaum (2022) notes, the Critical Race Theory offers tools that can help individuals make better sense of racism. CRT allows for an understanding that racism was “baked” into many aspects of the American life including but not limited to school policy and decision making. “Racism has been woven into the fabric of our nation” (Teitelbaum, 2022). Some scholars believe the only way to achieve racial progress is to align it with white interest (Teitelbaum, 2022). As Teitelbaum (2022) suggests, America is

“A nation that pretends to be the quintessence of a post-racial democracy, while simultaneously maintaining a structure that keeps Black, Indigenous, People of Color disproportionately economically disadvantaged, politically precarious, educationally deprived, violently policed, residentially ghettoized, medically disserved and subject to the ever-present disapproving gaze of whites.”

Capper (2015) Suggests that there is not a clear framework on how to address the missing link between theory and practice of CRT in schools. While many schools acknowledge the issue of systematic racism, there is a lack of know-how to build schools that are anti-oppressive and have an anti-racist agenda. Teitelbaum (2022) echoes those words discussing our country continues to be plagued by racial bias and ideas. He notes, “practices of the past continue to inflict harm in the present. To remedy this, Teitelbaum (2022) suggests

“What we require today is thorough and honest study of how racism has shaped our history and continues to influence us in significant ways, we need open and respectful conversation about these issues, followed by more inquiry and more reasonable discussion both in and out of schools.”

Teitelbaum (2022) further explains that in order to see a difference in systematic oppression, we need to use the teachings from the Critical Race Theory to unpack and rethink the social construct of race that divides so much of the United States societies.

The researcher utilized CRT as a conceptual lens when identifying and discussing the emergent themes. The themes which were brought to light by the participants counter-storytelling, can be directly linked to the four tenets of CRT, permanence of racism, whiteness as property, interest convergence, and the critique of liberalism. The findings of this study are a starting point for open conversations about the systematic oppression of traditionally marginalized students in schools. As the study found, a majority of the parents interviewed had experiences of oppression and racism in school. These experiences led parents to learn how to navigate the system and advocate for their child on their own.

The parents interviewed are trying to break the cycle of oppression and are fighting to give their children a chance to succeed. As the study found, some parents have had success in creating equal opportunities for their child while others find themselves continuing to battle the educational system. The goal of this study is to begin open and honest conversations about the inequities in schools in hopes that traditionally marginalized parents and students receive the same privileges as their counterparts without having to put in extra effort for those opportunities.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

The goal of narrative inquiry is to capture the true lived experiences of the participants. For the purpose of this study, the participants themselves were individuals who have been traditionally marginalized, attended school within the United States, and had at least one traditionally marginalized gifted student. The participants shared how their own experiences have influenced their parenting and school interaction practices.

“The idea that experiences grow out of other experiences, and experiences lead to further experiences. Wherever one positions oneself in that continuum—the imagined now, some imagined past, or some imagined future—each point has a past experiential base and leads to an experiential future” (Clandinin, 2013)

Through the participants stories, the researcher was able to answer the initial research questions of: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices? The sub-questions that supported the research question was: (1) What are the parents’ personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting? (2) What role did the parents’ personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child? (3)

What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

Central Research Question: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices?

When discussing their own encounters with the educational system, the majority of parents described a negative, inequitable experience. The experiences that the parents described have a direct connection to the elements of CRT. With parents counter-storytelling shedding light on the continuance of racial hierarchical structures, and the misrepresentation of marginalized parents as uninvolved allows society to place blame on parents for the failing of schools and thus allows for the continuance of an inequitable educational system (Dixson and Anderson, 2018). The finding of this study proves a counter-story to that narrative the lack of resources afforded to them which is in line with whiteness as property and the interest convergence of the schools and social groups they were a part of.

Parents shared stories about references made by teachers and students alike about their race using terms such as “wet back”, “dirty Mexican”, and Mexican Cheerleader to describe them as a person. This study found that cultural bias among educators cycles between generations as parents shared stories of how their own teachers did not bother to learn names of minority students but rather called all students of the same race the same name. Parents shared experiences of division because of the neighborhood they grew up in being related to gangs by their more affluent peers. These findings demonstrate a critical need for change in the understanding of cultural diversity and the long-term

effects negative discourse has on individuals. In the instance of this study, the parents interviewed were able to overcome and persist through breaking the barriers set forth by the educational system. This enabled parents to advocate for their own children in a matter that they felt was lacking in their own education. This is important as it can serve as both an example and framework for other families empowering people of color and other subordinated groups (Yosso et. al., 2009)

Supporting Research Question One: What are the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting?

Through counter-storytelling, the majority of parents recounted bias and racism from not only educators but also peers. The counter-narratives of the stories presented by parents revealed the barriers that were in place throughout their educational career once again dismissing the misrepresentation of marginalized parents as uninvolved and unconcerned about education. The finding of this study proves that claim to be erroneous and damaging to marginalized groups.

Many of the stories shared focus on the CRT tenants of the permanence of racism and interest convergence. Parents shared the importance of immigrants making positive contributions to the communities in which they lived yet, were mistreated and kept at a disadvantage within the hierarchical structures of society which included parent experiences in schools. Through counter-storytelling parents voiced the lack of educational resources they had to keep them engaged and challenged in school and how they had to learn how to self-advocate in order to receive a decent education. This finding demonstrates the resiliency of traditionally marginalized communities as they navigate

through the very systems meant to keep them at a disadvantage and learn how to overcome those challenges and reject the stereotypes placed on them. Parents shared stories will enable other families to gain knowledge necessary to achieve in a society built on foundations to keep minorities disadvantaged.

Question Two: What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child?

The researcher recognized and explicitly listened to the experiential knowledge of traditionally marginalized parents of gifted students to develop a narrative for each participant. Through the lens of analysis with the CRT the researcher analyzed the emergent themes of the narratives and developed the diagram below which shows the many outside factors that contribute to the parenting practices of a gifted child. As the diagram below shows, the outside factors that contribute to the parenting practices of a gifted child include, lack of educational resources, teacher bias and underestimation of traditionally marginalized gifted students, lack of affective support for gifted learners, influence of parent struggles, lack of cultural awareness in schools, parent involvement, and the presence of supportive teachers.

Figure 4

Outside Influences that affect parenting of a traditionally marginalized gifted students based on emergent themes.

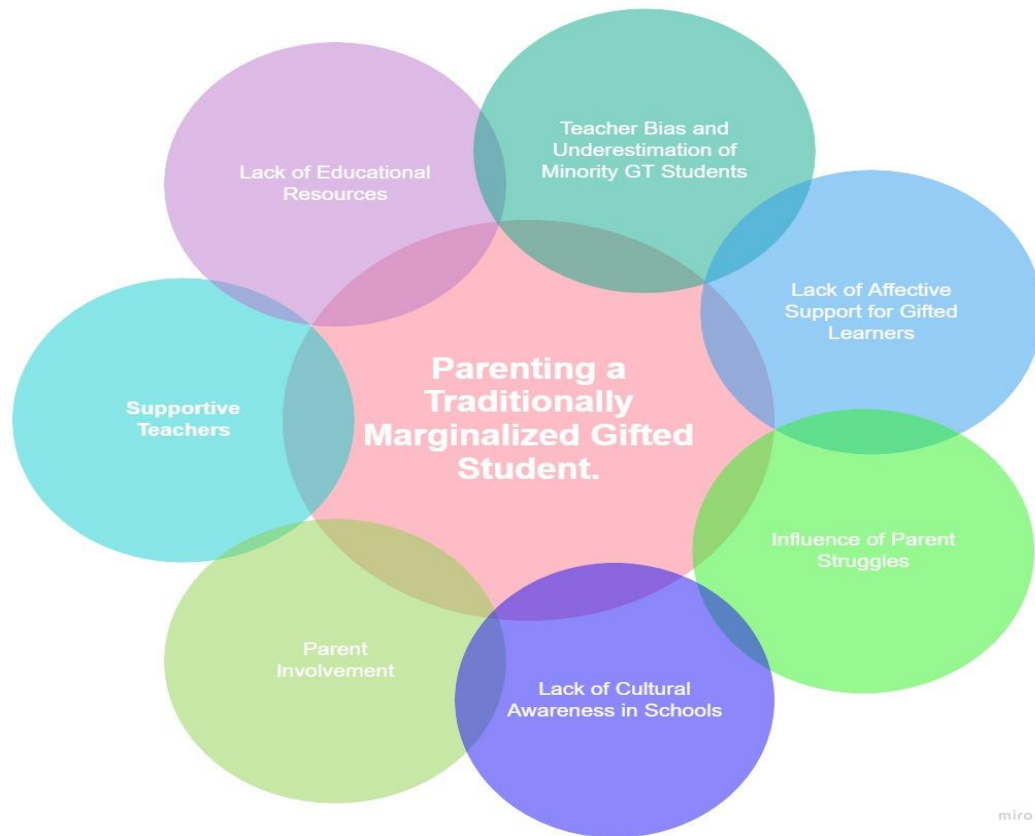


Figure 4

Lack of Educational Resources

Six out of the seven participants shared that they have struggled to find adequate resources to fulfil their child’s educational needs which directly correlates with the CRT tenant of whiteness as power. As mentioned, CRT in education is used to “Analyze educational inequity, the curriculum, and specifically, access to a high-quality, rigorous curriculum, has been almost exclusively enjoyed by White students (DeCuir and Dixon, 2004). It is further noted that honors and gifted programming has enabled schools to re-

segregate due to selection and admission to these types of programs. Noting that, “Students of color have virtually no access to high-quality curriculum” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). Many of the current policies and practices in education reinforce the notion of Whiteness as property (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). Parents shared stories discussed limited resources and opportunities for their traditionally marginalized gifted student. Families spoke about the lack of understanding and disconnect they felt with school administrators why did not follow through with promises to support students in their education.

Furthermore, parents discussed how their children were often denied appropriate services because of their cultural and linguistic differences. This finding will bring awareness to administrators, educators, and parents alike as it shows the need for administrators to reassess curriculum to ensure a rigorous and appropriate education for all students especially those with gifted needs. Educators can benefit from these shared stories by reflecting on their own practices and how their beliefs of labels on students are directly affecting the type of education that a child receives. Finally, parents will be able to use this section of the study to discuss the types of curriculum being utilized in school and can understand how to advocate for their child when there is a lack of rigor.

Teacher Bias and Underestimation of Traditionally Marginalized Gifted Students

Through the interview process, five of the seven parents discussed teacher bias and underestimation of traditionally marginalized gifted students. The connection to permanence of racism, whiteness as property, and the critique of liberalism are all demonstrated through the counter-storytelling of the participants. Parents explained how

surnames and skin color often initiate an immediate bias from educators. The stories told also described educators often challenging the giftedness of the traditionally marginalized student asking students if their parents completed their homework for them or making students retake a test because they thought they scored too high. This finding helps us understand the role racism plays and continues to play both consciously and unconsciously (Decuir and Dixson, 2004). Furthermore, the teachers who continuously use language that demeans and undermines the ability of students shows the permanence of racism in education.

The connection to this section of the findings and the existing literature are represented by the figure below.

Figure 5

Connection between emergent themes and the literature.

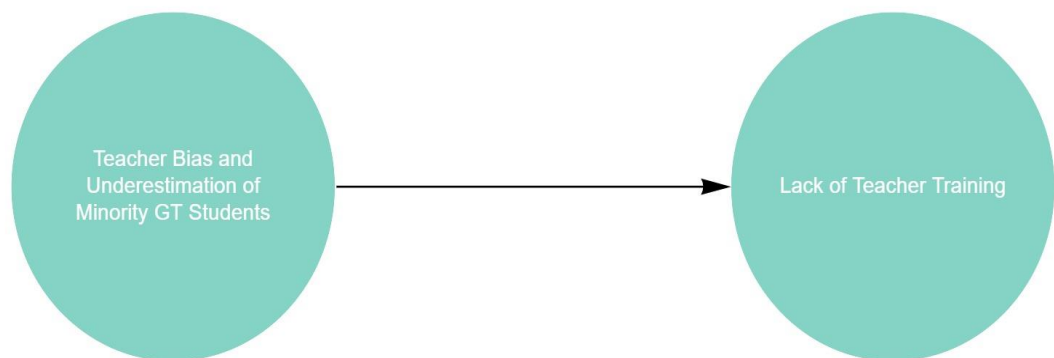


Figure 5

As the literature suggests, teacher bias and underestimation are not a new phenomenon. Disparities in gifted education can be directly linked to lack of teacher training and lack of support from educators and school officials (Naglieri & Ford, 2005; Ford, 2012; Fry & Vogt, 2010; Milner & Ford, 2010; Sanguras, 2013). Teachers themselves have discussed their current practices being harmful rather than helpful to gifted learners (Berman et. al., 2012, p.18) Furthermore, the current literature suggests that students encounter educators who are white females and who hold low expectations for them (Grantham, 2012). These low expectations can be attributed to other labels that are placed upon traditionally marginalized gifted students such as English Language Learner, Limited English Proficiency, or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners (Allen, 2017). Teachers tend to focus on the deficiency rather than the potential of the students (Allen, 2017).

Lack of Affective Support

Carla, Cristal, Jessica, Rhonda, Corina, and Colin each voiced their frustration with the lack of affective support and/or resources that their child was given. This finding is supported by the CRT tenant whiteness as property. Property interest has three levels, the right to transfer, the right of use and enjoyment, and the right of exclusion which has aided in “establishing Whiteness as a form of property”. The stories shared by traditionally marginalized parents of gifted students expose how their lack of affective resources for their gifted children has negative effects in both the short term and the long term of their gifted children’s lives. One parent whose child is now an adult spoke of the social-emotional struggles of her son throughout his life because of his lack of support

learning how to deal with his emotions the parent was concerned about suicide during the Covid pandemic.

Parents explained that they had to learn about intensities and overexcitabilities of their gifted children on their own and when discussed in schools those characteristics are often labeled as behavior issues rather than intensities. This finding serves two purposes. The first is for educators to be aware of the needs and the obligation they have to ensure that gifted students are emotionally supported throughout their education giving them the tools necessary to cope with everyday stressors so we do not have parents like Carla who worry about their child taking their own life. Second to give voice to marginalized groups (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004) expressing their needs and wants from the educational system.

Influence of Parent Struggles

Six of the seven parents interviewed expressed how their own struggles within the educational system motivated them to make sure their children had more opportunities. The stories parents shared about their own struggles reaffirms how traditionally marginalized parents of gifted students were once victims of the education system and had to fight against institutional racism (Yosso et. al. 2009). The counter-storytelling of the individuals gave a glimpse into all four tenants of CRT permanence of racism, whiteness as property, and the critique of liberalism. As previously discussed, the majority of parents described a negative, inequitable experience in school. These experiences were brought on by the social structures that, “Allocate the privileging of whites and the subsequent othering of people in all arenas, including education.” (DeCuir

and Dixson, 2004). Through their seek for equity rather than equality, parents were able to overcome the challenges brought to them by racist practices and policies. This finding serves to lift and desilence marginalized parent voices (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004) by acknowledge how they have overcome barriers to empower themselves and others.

Lack of Cultural Awareness

Of the seven parents interviewed, six described a lack of cultural awareness within education. This finding connects to the CRT tenants of interest convergence where teachers utilized race and culture in their own interest. As well as the critique of liberalism whereas DeCuir and Dixson (2004) argue that colorblindness fails to address the permanence of racism and the othering of people of color. Furthermore, colorblindness “Has made it nearly impossible to interrogate both the ways that White privilege is deployed and the normalizing effects of whiteness” (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). Colorblindness has been utilized as a means of justification to ignore and dismantle race-based polices (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004).

Emily who describes her children as Hispanic and American Indian shared a story of her son being ridiculed by his teacher because of his long hair saying he looked sloppy. The teacher did not take his culture into account. Emily also shared how teachers ask her children to teach the meaning of traditionally Mexican Holidays to the class. Parents also shared how their culture seems to be rejected by schools. This finding presents the need for training in cultural diversity of teachers to understand that their individual participation in the collective, structural racism perpetuates racialized student failure (Dixson and Anderson, 2018). This finding also brings awareness to leaders in

education about the types of racial instances that are happening in the classrooms and the need to address these in order to celebrate student differences rather than “other” them.

The existing literature suggest that the lack of cultural sensitivity has always had a presence in schools. The figure below shows the connection between the findings of this study and the existing literature.

Figure 6

Connection between the emergent theme and the literature.



Figure 6

As noted, teachers tend to focus on student labels rather than student potential (Allen, 2017). Grantham (2012), notes that teachers do not create opportunities for minorities to show their true abilities and talents. Teachers often have a vision of what gifted students “should be” and when students do not meet that mold, they are overlooked (Ford, 1998). Furthermore, it is noted that teachers create unchallenging environments for minority students which leaves them unprepared to face their future (Grantham, 2012). It

is noted that minority students are often placed in low ability grouping for the simple fact that they are not expected to achieve (Ford, 1998).

Parent Involvement

It is clear that the Covid-19 pandemic had a dramatic effect on the level of parent involvement in their children's schools. Four of the seven parents interviewed discussed being highly involved in their child's education. As stated by Dixson and Anderson (2018), there is a misrepresentation of marginalized parents as uninvolved parents which allows society to place blame on parents for the failing of schools and thus allows for the continuance of an inequitable educational system. The finding of this study proves that claim to be erroneous and damaging to marginalized groups. The goal of this study was to lift parent voices and experiences in order for other marginalized parents of gifted students to know that they are not alone in their fight for equity in the educational system.

As shown by the figure below, the finding of the importance of parent involvement in traditionally marginalized students' education is in line with current literature.

Figure 7

Connection between the emergent theme and the literature.

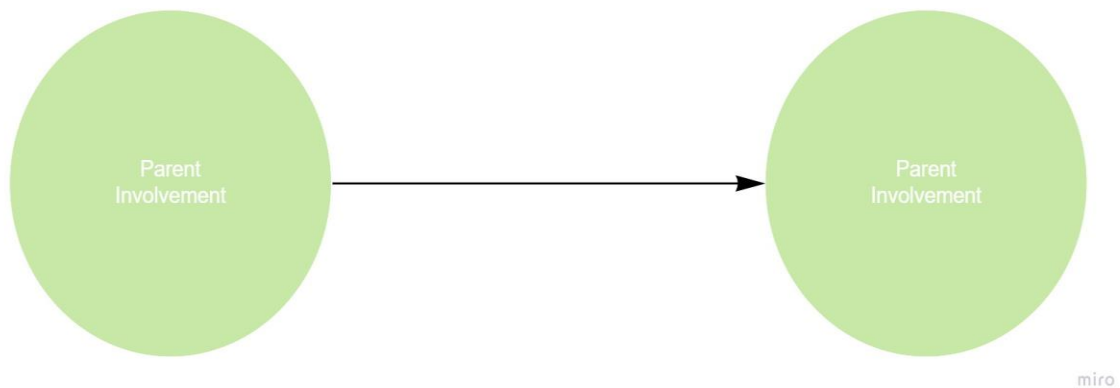


Figure 7

As noted by Coleman and Shah (2015), minority parents need to feel that they have the power to help their child reach their fullest potential. When parents are involved in their child’s education, they can advocate and monitor their child's academic progress (Frasier, 1991). The literature suggests that when parents are involved in making school decisions, volunteering on committees, and have the tools needed from the school to motivate their child, the child will have a better chance of academic success (Frasier, 1991). As the findings of this study and the current literature suggest, due to an ongoing mistrust of the educational system and the feeling of not belonging in schools, traditionally marginalized parents understand the importance of being involved in their child’s education but often lack the know-how to do so (Park and Holloway, 2013).

Supportive Teachers

Six of the seven parents interviewed shared stories of a positive encounter with a teacher who supported their child and their giftedness. Here, the CRT tenant of the critique of liberalism is utilized to show the positive effects when educators focus on equity rather than equality. As noted by DeCuir and Dixson (2004) equality assumes that citizens have the same opportunities and experiences, “Race, and experiences based on race are not equal, thus, the experiences that people of color have with respect to race and racism create an unequal situation.” Equity on the other hand recognizes an “uneven playing field. The shift of focus on equity by the teachers in the counter-stories of the participants explained how the support of a positive educator increased motivation and feelings of self-worth. Parents shared stories of teachers who went above and beyond to ensure that their children felt valued and challenged. This finding shows how critical it is to have educators who are willing to see children for who they are and what they can achieve. With this finding, teachers can self-reflect on their own practices to ensure that they are indeed providing an education based on equity rather than equality.

Supporting Research Question Three: What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child’s school?

Since the majority of traditionally marginalized parents experienced some form of bias within the educational setting, this caused them to enact on ensuring that they are more closely involved with their gifted child’s education. The stories shared by the participants brings the focus on their fight against the CRT tenant of interest convergence. Parents shared stories of othering and unequal educational opportunities. In

turn these experiences ensured their commitment to social justice (Yosso et. al., 2009) by empowering people of color and other subordinated groups (Yosso et. al., 2009). As noted by Dixon and Anderson (2018), The use of counter-storytelling by parents of color regarding their experiences with schools “Provides important insights into the means by which schools structure inequity and the ways that parents and children of color resist and persist.” The finding of this study accomplished that goal highlighting the role of educational policy and practices which perpetuate inequity and normative of whiteness. The goal of this study was to give voice and power to marginalized parents of gifted students while advocating for meaningful outcomes which redress racial inequity (Dixon and Anderson, 2018) based on parent experiences.

Limitations of the Research Study

In understanding another person and culture you must simultaneously understand yourself (Clandinin, 2013). The researcher is aware that she came into the research holding her own biases. Having experienced similar interactions as the participants in the educational system, the researcher acknowledged those biases and put them aside when interviewing and analyzing data as to not create confirmation bias. As noted by Creswell and Poth (2018), the participants in a qualitative study can play a significant role in validating the information collected. The researcher included member checking to ensure the stories of the participants were properly told. This “critical technique” ensured the accuracy of the stories shared and analyzed (Creswell and Poth, 2018).

The researcher encountered many obstacles when recruiting participants. As one participant noted herself, the population I chose to interview is often reluctant to share

their individual experiences. This statement is echoed by George et. al. (2014) who discuss the mistrust minorities feel when participating in research. Due to this reluctance, the researcher found it difficult to recruit enough participants. The researcher filed an amendment to extend the recruitment to further organizations to attain more participants for the study.

In the study conducted by George et. al. (2014), a lack of cultural sensitivity was discussed as a probable reason for low minority participation rates in studies. The researcher acknowledges that there was a language barrier for two of the participants. Understanding this, for further research with traditionally marginalized groups, the researchers will be sure to have a translator available to make sure that the participants fully understand the questions posed.

Finally, all the participants except one, were traditionally marginalized mothers of gifted students. The participation email was sent out to mothers and fathers of traditionally marginalized gifted students, yet only mothers replied. This limitation is important to address as the researcher was discussing how the parent's own experience in schools affected their parenting of their traditionally marginalized gifted student. Thus, the researcher only has firsthand experience from traditionally marginalized females.

Discussion and Implications

This study sought to focus on the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. In order to tell those lived experiences, this study was guided by the central research question: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction

practices? Followed by the sub-questions that supported the research questions: (1) What are the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting? (2) What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child? (3) What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

The seven individuals that participated in the study expressed common experiences as they navigated their way through the school system. Most parents interviewed endured hardships and bias in their own education. The participants shared that their own parents were unsure how to help or were unable to support due to working or lack of resources available. Having to struggle with their own education, the parents interviewed were determined to ensure that their own children did have similar experiences.

Implications for Policy

In order to see a difference in systematic oppression, we need to use the teachings from the Critical Race Theory to unpack and rethink the social construct of race that divides so much of the United States societies.

“What we require today is thorough and honest study of how racism has shaped our history and continues to influence us in significant ways, we need open and respectful conversation about these issues, followed by more inquiry and more reasonable discussion both in and out of schools” Teitelbaum (2022).

As noted by Ford, Wright, and Trotman Scott (2020), deliberate efforts to desegregate and integrate gifted education with excellence and equity must be made to see definite change within education. It is further noted that Gifted and Talented

Education has long been tailored to white students, taught by white teachers, and protected by white middle-class parents (Ford, Wright, and Trotman Scott, 2020).

According to Ford, Wright, and Trotman Scott (2020) what is often missing in schools with low gifted identification of traditionally marginalized students are, quality teachers, rigorous curriculum, a high level of student engagement, and high expectations of the student from their educators. In order to bring change into schools and increase identification of traditionally marginalized gifted students, the researcher is proposing the Gifted and Talented Diversity and Inclusion Act.

In this proposed act, schools will be expected to increase the number of teachers of color who serve the population. The newly hired educators must be culturally responsive and have a deep understanding of the traits of traditionally marginalized gifted students. Furthermore, the current curriculum utilized must be evaluated and if needed updated to ensure that it is rigorous for all students. Under the proposed act, an evaluation of student engagement both inside and outside of the classroom will take place. All stakeholders including the community partners, administration, teachers, parents, and students will engage in conversation to determine what types of programs should be available to students in and out of the classroom to maintain a high level of student engagement and involvement. Finally, as noted by Ford, Wright, and Trotman Scott (2020), a continued use of universal screening and non-verbal testing will take place to ensure that traditionally marginalized students are not overlooked for gifted education services.

Implications for Practice

To increase gifted identification of traditionally marginalized students. The researcher proposes changes to three significant areas which includes, an increase of parent involvement in schools, addressing and acknowledging teacher bias, and addressing the need for change within teacher preparation programs.

As noted by Grantham (2012), serious change within the educational system must begin with the families of minority students. The present study illuminated how race shapes the experiences of parents of color in their relationship to K-12 schooling and the way that parents and children of color have resisted and persisted against the educational inequality (Dixson and Anderson, 2018). It is further noted that “It is the responsibility of families, schools, and society to create a more favorable atmosphere for the full development of all students-including those with outstanding talents” (Coleman & Shah, 2015, p.73). The researcher suggests implementing a GT Parent University in schools. As suggested, CRT is utilized to explicitly listen to the lived experiences of marginalized individuals through counter-story telling (Yosso, et. al., 2009). Implementing the GT Parent University in schools will allow for marginalized voices to be heard in the school setting. In addition, this parent university will address the concerns brought about during the study including, gaining a better understanding of what being gifted means, how to support a gifted child and addressing their social/emotional needs.

Ford and Grantham (1997), discuss the referrals for gifted education are very heavily based on teacher input and nominations. In addition, Ford, (1995) suggests that teachers are poorly trained on cultural diversity and sensitivity. Understanding that

referrals are heavily based on teacher input along with the lack of training in cultural diversity and training, it is important that current teachers address and acknowledge the bias that they currently hold. The researcher proposes that all current teachers complete training to confront those biases and understand how they are holding traditionally marginalized gifted students at a disadvantage with their low expectations and misunderstanding of giftedness in other cultures. Buehler (2009) examined the role of discourse in education explicitly, the toxic role of negative discourse in schools with a large minority population. Buehler begins by stating that teachers are aware that they all hold different beliefs yet are less conscious about the language they use which is often contributed to the “ongoing state of divisiveness and negativity in schools” (2009). The language that is often heard within school walls reveals staff beliefs of who students are and what they are capable of. These beliefs then pose a problem for teachers and students alike dividing teachers who do not share similar beliefs and setting low expectations for students. “Language is powerful precisely because it works invisibly so much of the time” (Buehler, 2009). To remedy the situation, Buehler suggests that schools examine the forms language and aid teachers in recognizing the source of their beliefs about students and the ways individuals communicate their beliefs to others in everyday interactions. The use of language examination allows educators to have the power to make mindful changes to their beliefs and language in order to disrupt the damaging patterns of deficit thinking (Buehler, 2009).

As noted by Ford (1995), the teacher training in giftedness is almost non-existent. The researcher will share the findings of this study with teacher prep program leaders to

bring awareness of the current practices as well as the needs and wants expressed by the parents who participated in the study. Dixson and Anderson (2018) share the CRT tenant of whiteness as property “to understand issues surrounding the preparation and professional development of teachers”. Noting “Whiteness operates as a form of property by which preservice teachers that possess the experiences, perspectives, knowledge and dispositions aligned with and valued by the dominant white society find reinforcement and success” (Dixson and Anderson, 2018). Michael-Chadwell (2011, p.105) note that underrepresentation of traditionally marginalized gifted students will continue unless a “procedural shift occurs” in the identification procedures of traditionally marginalized students. The researcher will also share the common traits of traditionally marginalized gifted students to ensure the procedural shift does in fact occur.

Recommendations for Future Research

Traditionally marginalized gifted students are an important and valuable part of the future of our society. Understanding the systematic hardships that this population faces will help bridge the existing educational gap and bring awareness to the ongoing issues. In order to continue to tell the stories of these individuals, several questions for future research were brought to light by this study and its participants.

In hearing several of the participants discuss the lack of affective resources and support they had for their child, one future question for research is: How do traditionally marginalized gifted children with intensities and adequate affective support compared to traditionally marginalized gifted children with intensities and little to no affective support differ in adulthood? Carla shared the struggles her adult son is now facing due to the lack

of affective support. Many other parents who have young children expressed their concern with the social-emotional.

Many of the parents interviewed discussed their own social pressures and lack of fitting in with peers. It is also important to look at social pressures within the student's own home. These pressures could come from parents or siblings. Thus, the second question for further research is: How do social pressures affect traditionally marginalized student lives at school and at home?

Finally, parents interviewed shared stories of their children's ability to code-switch. Of the stories shared, none were traditionally marginalized females. This brings the third question for future research: How does code-switching present itself in traditionally marginalized gifted males versus females?

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived parenting experiences of traditionally marginalized gifted students within the educational setting. In order to tell those lived experiences, this study was guided by the central research question: How do the lived experiences of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students influence parenting and school interaction practices? Followed by the sub-questions that supported the research questions: (1) What are the parents' personal experience of being a minority in the educational setting? (2) What role did the parents' personal experiences play in current parenting practices of a gifted child? (3) What role do those personal experiences play in interactions with the gifted child's school?

The study concluded that there are many outside influences that contribute to the parenting and school interaction practices of traditionally marginalized gifted minorities. Those influences include lack of educational resources, teacher bias and underestimation of traditionally marginalized gifted students, lack of affective support for gifted learners, influence of parent struggles, lack of cultural awareness in schools, parent involvement, and the presence of supportive teachers.

As Teitelbaum (2022) explains, in order to see a difference in systematic oppression, we need to use the teachings from the Critical Race Theory to unpack and rethink the social construct of race that divides so much of the United States societies. The findings of this study are a starting point for open conversations about the systematic oppression of traditionally marginalized students in schools.

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Appendix A: Community Partner and letter of intent and agreement



UNIVERSITY of
DENVER

MORGRIDGE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Dr. Kapushion,

I am writing this letter in hopes that you will agree to become my community partner as I work on my dissertation to fulfil the requirements for the Ed.D program through the University of Denver. My passion is gifted minority students, currently, there is an underrepresentation of minority students in gifted education programs. Through my research, it is clear that parents play a huge role in student success. Many schools report a lack of involvement from traditionally marginalized parents. With that, I am planning to conduct a narrative study. My purpose statement is: The purpose of this study is to explore the parenting experience of traditionally marginalized gifted students. If you would like to accept this offer, please sign and date below.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Lora Romero

Blanche Kapushion PhD
Blanche Kapushion, PhD
Sheridan School Dist. 2
Community Partner

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Blanche Kapushion'.

DU Researcher


10/31/19

Date

10/31/19

Date

Appendix B: Consent Forms

 UNIVERSITY of DENVER

Consent Version: 06/06/2019
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Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: Exploring the Lives of Parents of Traditionally Marginalized Gifted Students

IRBNet #:

Principal Investigator: Lora Romero, 3rd Grade Gifted Teacher, M.A.

Faculty Sponsor: Norma Hefenstiel, PhD

Study Site: Observations and interviews will take place at the participants homes.

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Your participation in this research study is voluntary and you do not have to participate. This document contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate.

The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not you may want to participate in this research study. The person performing the research will describe the study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to give your permission to take part. If you decide to be involved in this study, this form will be used to record your permission.

Purpose
If you participate in this research study, you will be invited to describe your experiences as a parent of a traditionally marginalized student.

For this study, you will be asked to participate in observational studies as well as interviews. The researcher will observe your interactions with your gifted child in your home for one hour over a two-week period. The interview will also be in your home. The researcher will conduct a 60-minute interview to better understand your experience as a parent of a traditionally marginalized gifted student. The researcher will also ask questions relating to your own

DU IRB# 100-017
Consent v2 May 2019

Appendix C: Letter to Recruit A

Dear Dr. K,

My name is Lora Romero and I am a student from the Morgridge College of Education at the University of Denver. I am writing in hopes that I may be connected with parents of minority gifted students to participate in my study which explores the lives of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. I am a fourth-year student, and this study is a part of my doctoral dissertation. I greatly appreciate your help for this study.

Parents are eligible to be in this study if they are Black, Latino, or Native American, have attended a school within the United States, and if they have a child that has been identified as gifted through formal testing. If you have families that meet these qualifications and they decide to participate in this study, they will be asked to take part in an interview. Interviews will take place at a time and location that is convenient for families. If they are not eligible, but they know someone who is, I would greatly appreciate you either forwarding this email or contacting me with their information.

Remember, this is completely voluntary. They can choose to be in this study or not. If they would like to participate or have any questions about the study, please email me or contact me at lora.romero@du.edu or 970-401-1952 or my faculty advisor, Dr. Norma Hafenstein, at norma.hafenstein@du.edu.

Thank you very much.

Lora Romero

University of Denver

Doctoral Candidate

Appendix D: Letter to Recruit B

Dear Families,

My name is Lora Romero and I am a student from the Morgridge College of Education at the University of Denver. I am writing to invite you to participate in my study which explores the lives of parents of traditionally marginalized gifted students. I am a fourth-year student, and this study is a part of my doctoral dissertation. I greatly appreciate your help for this study.

You are eligible to be in this study if you are Black, Latino, or Native American, have attended a school within the United States, and if you have a child that has been identified as gifted through formal testing. If you meet these qualifications and to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in an interview. Interviews will take place at a time and location that is convenient for you. If you are not eligible, but know someone who is, I would greatly appreciate you either forwarding this email or contacting me with their information.

Remember, this is completely voluntary. You can choose to be in this study or not. If you would like to participate or have any questions about the study, please email me or contact me at lora.romero@du.edu or 970-401-1952 or my faculty advisor, Dr. Norma Hafenstein, at norma.hafenstein@du.edu.

Thank you very much.

Lora Romero

University of Denver

Doctoral Candidate