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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Roberta R. Smith entitled "A Survey of Attitudes of Parents and Teachers of Gifted Children Toward Educational Goals." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Special Education.

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A SURVEY OF ATTITUDES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF GIFTED CHILDREN TOWARD EDUCATIONAL GOALS

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of parents and teachers of gifted children in the East Tennessee area on certain educational goals. Before examining these attitudes, the following questions were raised:

1. Is there a difference between parent and teacher ratings on the importance of each goal?
2. Is there a difference between parent and teacher ratings on the school's responsibility in meeting each goal?
3. Is there a difference between parent and teacher rankings of the three most important goals?
4. Is there a difference in the way parents and teachers rate individual goals on importance and responsibility?

To obtain answers to these questions, a survey was conducted over thirteen school districts in East Tennessee. There were thirty-six participants--twelve teachers of gifted children and twenty-four parents of gifted children. The "Educational Goal Survey" by Dr. Keith Beery (1977) was chosen as the instrument. Each participant was asked to rate eleven educational goals on importance and school responsibility for the goals. They were also asked to rank

in order of first, second and third the three goals they felt were most important.

The results showed no significant differences found between groups on the first three questions raised. There was, however, a significant difference found on five of the responses for parents and teachers when rating individual goals on importance and responsibility. This suggested a positive correlation may exist between the two categories.

Analyses of the responses showed parents and teachers were in general agreement on both importance and school's responsibility of each goal. The ranking of goals also produced very similar responses. Both parents and teachers ranked Self-Esteem as the number-one goal of importance.

It was concluded that further investigation following the stated recommendations could produce relevant and needed information for gifted program planning and implementation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The subject of giftedness in children has become increasingly complex in the last few years. Twenty years ago, the etiology of giftedness was considered to be genetic and could be measured simply by administering an intelligence test (Gallagher, 1975). Today, however, giftedness is viewed on a much broader conceptual level. This is not to say that intelligence tests are not used to identify gifted children, but rather there are many other variables which now are included in the identification process. Some of these variables include high academic achievement, creativity, and leadership ability. The identification process is dependent on the particular definition used and the variables included.

There are many different definitions of gifted children, because "giftedness" is an abstract term, and because people have different ideas of what should happen in a program. The interrelationship of definition and goals is a recurrent problem in the communication between educators and parents.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to compare teacher and parent attitudes towards general educational goals. More

specifically, the study asks whether a difference exists between what these persons profess as important and how responsible they feel the school is for meeting these goals. Answers to these concerns should lead to better programming.

Need for the Study

"It is ironic that the most able and talented children in western society, such as Britain, the United States, and Canada, by and large receive the worst education" (Vernon, Adamson, & Vernon, 1977, p. ii). There are many reasons why this statement is true. But perhaps one of the major reasons is the fact that people in our society still cannot understand why their money should be spent on children who already have an advantage. Why have a special program for a child who can easily achieve right where he is? (Bettleheim, 1976) What oftentimes goes unnoticed is that many gifted children do not achieve up to their potential (Boston, 1976; Kaufmann, 1976; Painter, 1977).

Since the schools are not meeting their needs, the gifted are becoming bored and disillusioned. The enthusiasm and great potential of these gifted children are being stifled and eventually destroyed (Boston, 1976; Pennsylvania State Department of Education, 1973; Treffinger, 1976). The schools are causing this waste by not providing the type of programs needed to enhance, strengthen, and broaden the enthusiasm and potential that is laid before them.

Yet, today in our society the trend in education is toward "a free appropriate education for all handicapped children" (Public Law 94-142, 1975, p. 1). Laws are being passed that require schools to design programs to meet the needs of all types of children. There are federal incentive grants to support programs for the gifted (Public Law 95-561, 1978). But the question is whether these programs are "appropriate" as stated by law or are they simply meeting legal standards. In order to meet legal standards, the parents must approve the program for their child. Therefore, it would seem vital to the school administrators, whose responsibility is to meet these legal standards, to be aware of what parents consider critical in acceptance of a gifted program. This study is directed to that very question. What are the components of quality gifted education and do the professional educators and the parents agree?

The two most influential and valuable groups of people in a child's life are his parents and teachers. Yet, in the past parents have not been regarded as useful contributors to the educational process (Beery, 1977; Kelly, 1974). The trend now is beginning to change as educators are recognizing the valuable resource they have been ignoring.

> Even special educators, long accustomed to regarding parents as potential sources of children's problems, are finding parent involvement to be an essential factor in the success of their educational program [MacDonald, 1971, p. 7].

One purpose of this study was to give parents the opportunity to express their attitudes. This should help to break down some of the barriers that seem to plague communications between parents and teachers.

> When parents and teachers work at cross purposes, the child suffers. When parents and educators possess a mutual appreciation of the role each has to play in the education of the child, opportunities for development are increased [Voelker, 1967, p. 24].

Statement of the Problem

This study examined parent and teacher attitudes toward various educational goals for gifted children. Two particular questions were asked regarding each goal: (1) the importance of the goal and (2) the school's responsibility in meeting that goal. In addition, each subject was asked to rank the three educational goals he felt were the most important.

Comparisons were made between the groups of parents and of teachers in regard to the importance of each goal and the school's responsibility in meeting that goal. Additional comparisons were made on various subgroups.

Research Questions

The following research questions were examined:

1. Is there a difference between parent and teacher responses on the importance of each goal?

2. Is there a difference between parent and teacher responses on the degree of school responsibility in meeting each goal?
3. Is there a difference between parent and teacher responses on the ranking of the three most important educational goals?
4. Is there a difference in the way each group rated individual goals on importance and responsibility?

Definition of Terms

1. Intellectually gifted--anyone who is enrolled in a program designed for intellectually gifted, talented, or advanced children. The criteria for enrollment vary among programs.
2. Attitude--a mental state that exemplifies one's disposition on a particular subject (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1964).
3. Parent--anyone who is a natural parent, step-parent, or guardian of a gifted child.
4. Teacher--anyone who is responsible for at least part of the total curriculum of a gifted child.
5. Total curriculum--all the activities and experiences for an individual under the supervision of the school. This includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor functions.

Limitations

This study has posed several specific limitations that require consideration. The following are a list of these limitations:

1. This study was conducted, using only parents and teachers of gifted children who agreed to participate on a voluntary basis and may not be entirely representative of parents and teachers of all gifted children.
2. This study was conducted over the twenty-eight school districts of the Second Congressional District of Tennessee that have gifted programs in progress.
3. The measuring instrument used, "Educational Goal Survey," can only yield results based on the specific questions asked in the survey. A different instrument could yield different results.
4. The definition of intellectually gifted had to be broadened to include advanced, talented, and special children in order to meet with the definitions used in the various districts that participated in the study.

Procedures

Subjects

The subjects in this study were selected from two populations--parents of gifted children and educators of gifted children. These people were selected from the Second Congressional District of Tennessee which consists of twenty-eight school districts. From these twenty-eight school districts, thirteen were found to have gifted programs in progress. Twelve of the thirteen districts agreed to participate in the study.

The number of teachers selected to participate from each district was dependent on the number of different types of gifted programs from each district. One teacher per type of program was randomly selected. The number of parents selected was dependent on the number of gifted students the selected teacher had as her caseload. Parents were randomly selected from the group of parents whose children were students of the selected teachers. Parents participating in the study ranged from two to four sets per district.

Selection of Instrument

To obtain the necessary information for this study, a questionnaire was used. The questionnaire "Educational Goal Survey" (see Appendix) was selected from a program developed by Dr. Keith Beery of the University of California

entitled "Synergy" (Beery, 1977). Selection of this instrument was based on the fact that Beery was investigating the same questions as presented in this study, i.e., the importance of educational goals and the school's responsibility in meeting these goals.

The questionnaire listed twelve educational goals and asked for responses in two areas. The areas were the degree of importance of each goal and the school's responsibility in meeting each goal. In addition, each respondent was asked to rank the three goals of highest importance. A section for additional comments was included to clarify or enlarge upon any previous questions. Demographic data were obtained from parents and teachers.

Collection and Analysis of Data

Permission was asked of each supervisor of special education to use one randomly selected teacher of the gifted to respond to the questionnaire. That teacher was also asked to produce a list of all the parents of gifted children in her classes. From that list, sets of parents were randomly selected, depending on the number of gifted children in the teacher's classes. All questionnaires were number coded with names and numbers kept in a master file for follow-up use only. Once the criteria for follow-up were met, the file was destroyed. Comparisons between parents and teachers on the goal statements were made, using nonparametric statistics.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter I contains the purpose of the study, need for the study, statement of the problem, research questions, definitions of terms, limitations, and brief overview of procedures.

Chapter II contains a preliminary review of gifted children, relevant laws and appropriateness of programs, and parents' and educators' roles in program-planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Chapter III contains a description of subjects, selection of the instrument, design of the instrument, collection of the data, and analysis procedures used.

Chapter IV presents the data collected and an analysis of these data.

Chapter V includes the discussion, conclusions, implications of the investigation, and recommendations as a result of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

> The United States has forty-five million school age children, and of that number perhaps two million are so superior in intellect or talent that they may require special education opportunities to develop to their potential [Merrow, 1976, p. 1].

These figures show that the population of gifted children is not one to be disregarded. These special children do exist, and exist in large numbers. With the increasing research showing evidence for the need to expand definitions (Getzels & Jackson, 1965; Lyon, 1976), these population figures will, in all probability, be rising.

This reference to "the need to expand definitions" has been a relevant issue in gifted education for many years. Exactly who are the gifted? What are their characteristics? How can they be identified? What are their needs? Answers to these questions have been attempted by many specialists in the field of gifted education. However, there have been a variety of different answers that hold very different implications for these children. Definitions have ranged from the unidimensional definition of giftedness being only a high IQ score to the all encompassing definition of "one who shows consistently remarkable performance in any worthwhile line of endeavor" (Havighurst, 1958, p. 32). The early definition, by IQ alone, drew

criticism because it was felt that the strong correlation between "gifted child" and "child with high IQ" made most educators and psychologists blind to other forms of excellence (Getzels and Jackson, 1965).

One person who clearly pointed out the severe limitations of a single IQ score for determining giftedness was J. P. Guilford. In his work, "The Structure of Intellect" (Guilford, 1959), Guilford derived over 120 different kinds of intelligence. The question then arose: Could one test of intelligence possibly cover all these areas?

Another source of dissatisfaction about IQ tests was from studies which looked at creativity as central to giftedness. People such as J. W. Getzels and P. W. Jackson (1965) made significant contributions toward the inclusion of creativity in the definition of giftedness.

As previously stated, Havighurst presented a definition in 1958 that included not only IQ and creativity but any form of consistently remarkable performance. This largely inclusive definition puts a great deal of responsibility for identification of gifted children on both parents and teachers. Any time a definition is broadened, there is more room for error or at least for subjective decisions. Parents will no longer sit back and let educators decide on the proper type of education for their child. Schools must know what definition forms the basis of their program and all the characteristics that fit that definition. In a

study by Dembinski and Mauser (1978), it was found that parents want: (1) to know about their child's progress, (2) all the educational alternatives available, (3) all reports shown to them and explained, and (4) placement recommendations and explanations of placement, etc. Parents want honest and direct responses from educators. This leaves no room for indecisiveness of definitions. If gifted education is to meet the needs of these children and the demands of the parents, there must be cohesiveness as to who these children are and what their needs are.

Although there is the attitude held by many that the gifted should have no special needs (Bettleheim, 1976), there are many studies that have been, and are being, conducted to support the need for special programs for the gifted (Albert, 1978; Painter, 1977; Pennsylvania State Department of Education, 1973; Pohl, 1976; Strang, 1959). Not all gifted children do achieve up to their potential. There are many reasons for this underachievement; one of the major reasons seems to be poor programming for these children. As Felice Kaufmann (1976) stated:

> This is not to say that a child actually plans not to achieve, but that his poor performance is a sign of resistance stemming from his anger at the situation [p. 18].

This "situation" is referring to the inappropriate program into which the gifted child is placed. The implications of inappropriate programming affect both the gifted child and the society of which he is a member. According to Painter (1977)

> Great talents, in whatever field, may reach fruition to the real benefit of their holders and of the community, or may lie fallow or may, if distorted, become a danger to their possessors and to society [p. 8].

Ruth Strang (1959), in a section on Mental Hygiene of Gifted Children in The Gifted Child, pointed out three reasons for having appropriate programs for gifted. The first reason was the expense to society of having undeveloped talent. The second was the danger of misdirected talent or ability if not given proper outlets. The third, and perhaps the most important reason, was the lack of self-fulfillment and satisfaction a gifted child could experience if given the chance.

With these implications in mind, several studies have been conducted to see to what degree gifted children are dissatisfied with their educational programs.

In a study by Lewis Terman, it was calculated that the typical gifted child was accelerated in school by 14 percent of his age as compared with unselected children, but that he was 48 percent of his age above the norm in intelligence. Taking the 34 percent, the difference between these two values, he commented that from one point of view "the gifted child is under-promoted to the extent of thirty-four percent, or approximately one-third of his age" (Painter, 1977, p. 8). It is perhaps because of this great discrepancy between the needs of gifted children and the appropriate services that there is an alarmingly high percentage of gifted dropouts in our high schools today. A

study conducted by the Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, Washington, D.C. (1976), found that as many as 18 percent of high school dropouts are gifted. Also, Dr. Bruce Boston (1976) reported that gifted children drop out of high school three to five times more than their distribution in the normal population.

Statistics, such as these, have caused some real changes in programming for the gifted. However, the majority of these changes have only come about in the past ten years or so. Up until the early 1970's most gifted children were handled individually through extra work and grade acceleration, still being restricted to the regular classroom (Butler, 1977). The 1970's saw the passage of many laws and bills across the country dealing with gifted children. In 1972, Tennessee passed the Weldon Bill (The Mandatory Education of the Handicapped Act). This act mandated that children identified as gifted in the state be appropriately served by public schools (Weldon Bill, 1972). In 1975, a national law was passed that, although it did not include "gifted" as a category, had a great impact on the development of gifted programs. That law was Public Law 94-142 or the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. It set a precedent that public schools must meet the needs of every child no matter what the handicapping condition.

In 1976, the government spent two and one-half million dollars on gifted programs. This was a big jump

from previous allocations, but still far from the amount of money spent in other special areas of education. For example, also in that year the government spent forty-three times that amount on underprivileged children and twenty-eight times that amount on handicapped children (Merrow, 1976).

Each year more and more is being done to improve the quality of gifted education. One of the main reasons for this push toward better gifted programs is parents. Parents are learning what their rights are and are making demands on the system. They play a big part in funding for gifted programs. In 1977 in California, when a group of advocates for the gifted went to talk with Governor Jerry Brown concerning funding for better programs, Brown was quoted as saying, "Where are the parents? We don't want to listen to you. The people who want it should be the parents. They're the ones who got the funding in the first place in California" (Stanley, George, & Solano, 1977, p. 4).

The question is then raised: Why are parents considered an important factor in dealing with gifted children? One of the reasons that administrators, such as Governor Brown, feel they are important is the fact that before legal standards can be met involving gifted programs, the parents must approve them as being appropriate for their child. A program can be set up to meet legal standards, but without the parents' approval, it may not be deemed "appropriate." Therefore, because the parents are

the final word (without a due process hearing), administrators should know what they consider critical in acceptance of a gifted program.

Beyond meeting legal standards, there are other vital reasons why parents are needed in the planning of their child's education. Many studies have been done concerning the role of the family in a child's life. It has been found that the family is the most crucial force which shapes children's lives (Wallinga & Crase, 1979). Dr. Keith Beery (1977), of the University of California, has stated that "the home has approximately twice as much influence as the school upon students' academic, social, and emotional development" (p. 3). Also, the Pennsylvania State Department of Education (1973) found that family expectations are a major factor in children's motivation and the single most influential determinant of high and low achievement, both in and out of school.

Unfortunately, it seems that most professional educators do not encourage the participation of parents in the decision-making process. Yoshida (1978), when surveying 2,600-plus educators regarding parental involvement in the pupil-planning process, reported that their perceived contribution was minimal.

Before World War II, parent-school communication was good. The school was the recreational and social center of the community. However, after the war increased

mobility was possible, and people would go outside the community for social activity. Also, teachers and administrators began coming from outside the immediate area, bringing with them differing value systems. Busing has caused schools to lose the "community feeling." Some families live miles from their children's school and in a completely different environment (Kelly, 1974).

Because of these variables, the gap continued to widen until the point educators told parents to send their children and their money to school but to leave education to the professionals (Beery, 1977). Kelly summed up the situation, saying that educators have tried to convince parents that their knowledge and expertise is much more valuable than anything the parents could possibly have to offer (Kelly, 1974).

For a while, parents actually believed this and stayed away from the schools. But, with the passage of certain laws in the seventies (previously discussed) mandating parent involvement, they began to realize their worth. Not only were parents recognizing this, but educators also were recognizing the valuable resource they had been ignoring. For educators, it was no longer a question of whether to involve parents or not. Parents were involved. The question was how to do this in a productive manner that would gratify both parents and the school (Neff, 1973). In spite of an increased legally defined

relationship, the real parent-school relationship is not dictated by law. According to Clements and Alexander (1975):

> Law may provide an impulse that initiates a change in momentum but real and meaningful parent involvement grows out of community values, power balances, and parent and teacher expectations. . . . [p. 6].

The key here is that the expectations of parents and teachers be common goals to both parties. Strengthening the home/school relationship depends on a shared sense of ownership in the child's education (Roberts, 1980).

In summation, the review of this literature suggests that there are some definite needs in several areas. One area of need revolves around the definitions of gifted-ness. In order for educators to present a strong program for gifted students, they must come to some common decisions about who they are. Parents do not want to hear that their child is considered gifted in one school district and not in another. They want justifications and explanations and the school systems must have them if they do not want to end up in court. Another area of need is gifted education. Questions, such as what kinds of programs do these children need according to their parents and what should be the goals for these programs, are crucial if educators are going to supply the "appropriate" education that is required. Also, there is the need for the responsibility of this appropriate education not to fall solely with the teacher. Parents must be made active participants in this process.

Before this can be successfully implemented, there must be open, honest communications between parents and teachers. Goals for these gifted children must be commonly agreed upon and responsibility for the goals commonly shared.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Subjects

The focus of this study was to examine the following issues: (1) the importance of various educational goals for gifted children and (2) the school's responsibility in meeting these goals as seen by parents and teachers of gifted children. To investigate these issues, two different populations were selected--parents of gifted children and educators of gifted children. These people were selected from the Second Congressional District of Tennessee which consists of twenty-eight school districts. From these twenty-eight school districts, thirteen were found to have gifted programs in progress. Twelve of the thirteen districts agreed to participate in the study.

The number of teachers selected to participate from each district was dependent on the number of different types of gifted programs from each district. One teacher per type of program was selected. The number of parents selected was dependent on the number of gifted students the selected teacher had as her caseload. Parents were randomly selected from the group of parents whose children were students of the selected teachers. Parents participating in the study ranged from two to four sets per district.

Selection of the Instrument

To obtain the necessary information for this study, a questionnaire was used (see Appendix). The questionnaire, "Educational Goal Survey," was selected from a program developed by Dr. Keith Beery, of the University of California, in 1977 entitled "Synergy." The main focus of Synergy is to have parents, teachers, and students work together in a full partnership to better facilitate the total education of the child (Beery, 1977). The questionnaire, which lists twelve educational goals for students, was devised by Beery from the findings of a state-appointed citizens' commission who studied in length the skills and attitudes children most need now and in the future.

Beery believes that a statement of common educational goals for students is an absolute essential for success in school. He identifies twelve educational goals in his survey. They are: (1) Respect for Others, (2) Self-Esteem, (3) Learning, (4) Work, (5) Environment, (6) Thinking, (7) Communication, (8) Science, (9) Socioeconomics, (10) Health, (11) Art , and (12) Others. The key phrase is "common educational goals." The goals must be understood and agreed upon by all involved before successful attainment can be achieved.

Selection of this questionnaire was based on the fact that Beery was investigating the same questions as presented in this study, i.e., the importance of educational

goals and the schools' responsibility in meeting these goals as perceived by parents and teachers. Beery also included students as respondents to his questionnaire, but students were not used in this study.

There were two forms of the "Educational Goal Survey" used. The first was the original survey. This was given to teachers. A modified form was used by parents. The only modification was changing the words to personalize the items as follows: "The student is learning to respect the rights, feelings and cultures of others . . ." to the parent form of "Your Child is learning to respect the rights, feelings and cultures of others. . . ."

Design of the Instrument

The questionnaire was designed to measure both the importance of educational goals and the school's responsibility in assisting students in acquisition of these goals. This measurement was accomplished by requiring the questionnaire respondents to rate each goal zero, one, two, three, or four--zero, indicating that the goal was of no importance or the school was not responsible for student acquisition, and four, indicating the goal was of great importance or the school was maximally responsible for attainment. In addition, the respondents ranked the three goals perceived by them as the most important to the child's education. A section asking for additional comments was

used to further clarify responses. Demographic data were also obtained from parents and teachers. Parent questionnaires included information concerning parents' occupations, educational level obtained, and sex of the gifted child. Teachers' questionnaires included information concerning educational level obtained, area of degree or degrees, recency of training, and number of years of teaching experience, both with regular classroom students and with gifted students.

Collection of Data

Supervisors of special education services in the twenty-eight school districts of East Tennessee that have gifted programs were utilized as contact persons in this study. They were initially contacted by telephone to obtain permission to use teachers from their district in the study. A letter was sent after permission was obtained, describing further the process to be used and requesting a list of all teachers of gifted children in the district. From this list, one teacher per type of gifted program in each district was randomly selected.

Each teacher was contacted by telephone and asked to participate in the study. When agreement was obtained, a number coded questionnaire was sent to the teacher. If a teacher refused to participate, another random selection was done. The teacher was also asked to supply a list of all parents of gifted children in her program.

From this list, sets of parents were randomly selected, depending on the number of gifted children involved in the program. If the teacher had fewer than ten children, two sets of parents were selected. If the teacher had ten to twenty-five gifted children, three sets of parents were selected. If the teacher had more than twenty-five gifted children, four sets of parents were selected.

The parents selected were contacted by telephone and asked to participate in the study. When agreement was obtained, a number coded questionnaire was sent to each set of parents. If a set of parents refused to participate, another random selection was done.

Self-addressed, stamped envelopes were attached to each form so that the respondents could conveniently return them to the investigator.

Analysis of the Data

A Chi Square statistic and a Spearman Correlation were used to analyze the data. Selection of these statistical procedures was based on the following:

1. The study was designed to measure attitudes.
2. Information received from the questionnaire was treated as ordinal data.
3. The sample size was small.

The Chi Square statistic was used to test the following null hypotheses:

1. There will be no difference between parent and teacher responses on the importance of each goal.
2. There will be no difference between parent and teacher responses on the degree of school responsibility in meeting each goal.
3. There will be no difference between parent and teacher responses on the ranking of the three most important educational goals.

The Spearman Correlation statistic was used to test the following null hypothesis:

1'. There will be no difference in the way each group rated individual goals on importance and responsibility.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Report of the Overall Responses

In response to the procedures used in this study, a total of thirty-six questionnaires were returned--twelve teacher and twenty-four parent. This produced a teacher response of 100 percent and a parent response of 84 percent. In this chapter the questionnaires will be examined by a Chi Square statistic and a Spearman Correlation performed at The University of Tennessee Computer Center. An overall report of group responses is followed by a report of the analysis of each null hypothesis.

The subjects rated the goal statements in terms of how important each goal was and in terms of how responsible the school was for meeting each goal. Table 1 reports the ratings on importance, and Table 2 reports the ratings on school responsibility for teachers and parents. The frequency with which both groups rated each goal is indicated by percentages for the group.

In stating their opinions toward the importance of each goal, both the majority of parents and teachers scored each goal in the 3 (much) to 4 (great) range. No more than 16.7 percent of either group answered 2 (some) or less.

TABLE 1

IMPORTANCE OF GOALS TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS IN PERCENTAGES

Goals	Ratings				
	0 (None)	1 (Little)	2 (Some)	3 (Much)	4 (Great)
1. Respect for Others					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	25 %	75 %
Parents	0%	0%	0 %	12.5%	87.5%
2. Self-Esteem					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	8.3%	91.7%
Parents	0%	0%	0 %	16.7%	83.3%
3. Learning					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	16.7%	83.3%
Parents	0%	0%	0 %	25 %	75 %
4. Work					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	25 %	75 %
Parents	0%	0%	0 %	16.7%	83.3%
5. Environment					
Teachers	0%	0%	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%
Parents	0%	0%	8.3%	20.8%	70.8%
6. Thinking					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	8.3%	91.7%
Parents	0%	0%	0 %	16.7%	83.3%
7. Communication					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	8.3%	91.7%
Parents	0%	0%	0 %	12.5%	87.5%

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Goals	Ratings				
	0 (None)	1 (Little)	2 (Some)	3 (Much)	4 (Great)
8. Science					
Teachers	0%	0 %	8.3%	58.3%	33.3%
Parents	0%	0 %	4.2%	41.7%	54.2%
9. Socioeconomics					
Teachers	0%	0 %	8.3%	41.7%	50.0%
Parents	0%	0 %	12.5%	29.2%	58.3%
10. Health					
Teachers	0%	8.3%	8.3%	16.7%	45.8%
Parents	0%	0 %	0 %	66.7%	54.2%
11. Art					
Teachers	0%	0 %	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%
Parents	0%	0 %	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%

Teachers N = 12

Parents N = 24

TABLE 2

SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOALS BY TEACHERS AND PARENTS IN PERCENTAGE

Goals	Ratings				
	0 (None)	1 (Little)	2 (Some)	3 (Much)	4 (Great)
1. Respect for Others					
Teachers	0%	0%	8.3%	75.0%	16.7%
Parents	0%	0%	20.8%	54.2%	25.0%
2. Self-Esteem					
Teachers	0%	0%	16.7%	41.7%	41.7%
Parents	0%	0%	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%
3. Learning					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	8.3%	91.7%
Parents	0%	0%	8.3%	41.7%	50.0%
4. Work					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	41.7%	58.3%
Parents	0%	0%	12.5%	45.8%	41.7%
5. Environment					
Teachers	0%	0%	33.3%	66.7%	0 %
Parents	0%	0%	45.8%	20.8%	33.3%
6. Thinking					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	25.0%	75.0%
Parents	0%	0%	12.5%	37.5%	50.0%
7. Communication					
Teachers	0%	0%	0 %	8.3%	91.7%
Parents	0%	0%	0 %	29.2%	70.8%

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Goals	Ratings				
	0 (None)	1 (Little)	2 (Some)	3 (Much)	4 (Great)
8. Science					
Teachers	0%	0 %	16.7%	41.7%	41.7%
Parents	0%	0 %	4.2%	29.2%	66.7%
9. Socioeconomics					
Teachers	0%	0 %	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%
Parents	0%	0 %	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%
10. Health					
Teachers	0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	0 %
Parents	0%	8.3%	70.8%	12.5%	8.3%
11. Art					
Teachers	0%	0 %	25.0%	66.7%	8.3%
Parents	0%	0 %	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%

Teachers N = 12

Parents N = 24

The responses in terms of responsibility were similar to the ratings of importance. Although most of the subjects rated the school's responsibility for each goal as either a 3 (much) or a 4 (great), there were a few exceptions worthy of attention. The goals concerning Environment, Health, and Art did receive a higher percentage of 2's (some) than any others. The following are the percentages of parents and teachers that felt the school had only some (2) responsibility for these goals:

1. Environment--parents: 45.8 percent; teachers: 33.3 percent;
2. Health--parents: 70.8 percent; teachers: 33.3 percent; and
3. Art--parents: 50 percent; teachers: 25.0 percent.

The null hypotheses which were tested by a Chi Square statistic were accepted or rejected on the basis of the .01 level of significance. This level was chosen due to the small sample size which resulted in small cell sizes of five or less. When using a Chi Square statistic with cell sizes of five or less, levels of signficance may be shown which are in fact due to distortion produced by the small cell size rather than any real difference among cells.

A significance level of .05 was chosen for the null hypothesis, using a Spearman Correlation. This significance level was chosen because small sample size does not affect a Spearman Correlation.

Hypothesis 1

There will be no difference between parent and teacher responses on the importance of each goal. A series of eleven cross tabulations were computed to compare parent and teacher responses on the importance of each goal. Table 1 (pages 27-28) reports these comparisons in percentages for each group. Based on a .01 level of significance, no significant differences were found. The hypothesis was accepted.

Both the majority of parents and teachers rated each goal as a 3 (much importance) or 4 (great importance). At least 50 percent of the responses fell in the 4 (great importance) category with the exception of the goals on Environment, Science and Art. Even these three goals had percentage well over 50 percent when combining responses on 3 (much) and 4 (great).

Hypothesis 2

There will be no difference between parent and teacher responses on the degree of school responsibility in meeting each goal. A series of eleven cross tabulations were computed to compare parent and teacher responses on the degree of school responsibility in meeting each goal. Table 2 (pages 29-30) reports these comparisons in percentages for each group. Using a .01 level of significance,

no significant differences were found. The hypothesis was accepted.

Once again, over 50 percent of the responses on each goal fell into the 3 (much school responsibility) and 4 (great school responsibility) range. However, there was a much larger percentage of responses for 3 (much responsibility) than in the ratings for importance of goals. It is interesting to note that only 8.3 percent of the teachers felt Art was a 4 (great responsibility of the school) and parents also had only a 16.7 percent response on Art as a 4. Teachers had a 0 percent response on Environment and Health as a 4 (great responsibility of the school). Parents also had only a 8.3 percent response on Health as a 4 and 12.5 percent response on Health as a 3 (much responsibility). This was the only incident of more than 50 percent response on a rating of 2 (some) or less. They had a 33.3 percent response on the school being of great importance in teaching about the environment as compared to 0 percent of the teachers.

Hypothesis 3

There will be no difference between parent and teacher responses on the ranking of the three most important educational goals. A series of three cross tabulations were completed to indicate the percentage of parent and teacher responses each goal received. The goals were

ranked in order of importance into first, second and third place. Table 3 shows these rankings. Once again no significant differences were found, using a .01 significance level.

In Rank 1, over 80 percent of the teachers ranked Self-Esteem or Learning as the most important goal for gifted children. Parents were somewhat more diverse with 79 percent ranking Respect for Others, Self-Esteem, or Learning as the most important goals for gifted children. This is still a very similar ranking out of eleven possible goals.

In Rank 2, the responses were much more diversified. Every goal except Environment was ranked by either parents or teachers as the second most important goal for gifted children. However, over one-half (58.3 percent) of the teachers ranked Thinking in second place while parent scores were more evenly distributed.

In Rank 3, only five of the eleven goals were chosen by teachers. They were Respect for Others, Learning, Work, Thinking, and Communication. Parents chose the same five goals and also included Self-Esteem. The percentages of responses were well distributed among parents and teachers with no one goal receiving more than 33 percent of the responses.

These statistics do support the data presented in Hypotheses 1 and 2. No significant differences were found

TABLE 3

THREE MOST IMPORTANT GOALS

		Goals										
		Respect for Others	Self-Esteem	Learning	Work	Environment	Thinking	Communication	Science	Socioeconomics	Health	Art
	Rank 1											
Teachers	No. of Responses	0	6	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
	Percentage of Responses	0	50.0	25.0	0	0	8.3	16.7	0	0	0	0
Parents	No. of Responses	6	8	5	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
	Percentage of Responses	25	33.3	20.8	4.2	0	16.7	0	0	0	0	0
	Rank 2											
Teachers	No. of Responses	1	0	0	1	0	7	1	0	1	0	1
	Percentage of Responses	8.3	0	0	8.3	0	58.3	8.3	0	8.3	0	8.3
Parents	No. of Responses	3	3	4	3	0	6	3	1	0	1	0
	Percentage of Responses	12.5	12.5	16.7	12.5	0	25.0	12.5	4.2	0	4.2	0

TABLE 3 (Continued)

		Goals										
		Respect for Others	Self-Esteem	Learning	Work	Environment	Thinking	Communication	Science	Socioeconomics	Health	Art
	Rank 3											
Teachers	No. of Responses	1	0	2	2	0	3	4	0	0	0	0
	Percentage of Responses	8.3	0	5.6	5.6	0	25.0	33.3	0	0	0	0
Parents	No. of Responses	1	2	3	6	0	3	9	0	0	0	0
	Percentage of Responses	4.2	8.3	12.5	25.0	0	12.5	37.5	0	0	0	0

in responses of parents and teachers on each goal. There also appears to be little difference in the ranking of these goals.

Hypothesis 4

There will be no difference in the way each group rated individual goals on importance and responsibility. A Spearman Correlation was computed on each goal to determine if a relationship existed between rating of importance and rating of school responsibility for both parents and teachers. A significance level of .05 was chosen to test this hypothesis. Table 4 reports the correlation between importance and responsibility by teachers and parents. It shows both the correlation and level of significance.

A significant difference was found on five goals of the teacher questionnaires. They were Learning, Thinking, Science, Socioeconomics, and Art. A significant difference was also found on five goals of the parent questionnaires. Four of the five goals were the same for parents and teachers, the difference being the parent group had a significant difference for Self-Esteem rather than Learning.

This does seem to imply that for these goals the selection of a goal's importance leads to some predictability of the selection of that goal's responsibility. There seems to be a positive correlation between the two categories.

TABLE 4

SPEARMAN CORRELATION OF IMPORTANCE TO RESPONSIBILITY
BY TEACHERS AND PARENTS

	Teachers[1]		Parents[2]	
	Degree of Correlation	Degree of Significance	Degree of Correlation	Degree of Significance
Self-Esteem			.42	.019
Learning	.67	.008		
Thinking	.52	.041	.42	.019
Science	.59	.020	.53	.004
Socioeconomics	.50	.048	.40	.024
Art	.72	.004	.53	.004

[1]Teachers N = 12

[2]Parents N = 24

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine parent and teacher attitudes toward various educational goals for gifted children. Before examining these attitudes, several questions were raised. They were:

1. Is there a difference between parent and teacher ratings on the importance of each goal?
2. Is there a difference between parent and teacher ratings on the school's responsibility in meeting each goal?
3. Is there a difference between parent and teacher rankings of the three most important goals?
4. Is there a difference in the way parents and teachers rate individual goals on importance and responsibility?

To find the answers to these questions, a survey entitled "Educational Goal Survey" was presented to parents and teachers of gifted children in twelve school districts in East Tennessee. They rated eleven educational goals in two categories--importance and school's responsibility. A

scale of 0 to 4 (0--none, 1--little, 2--some, 3--much, 4--great) was used as the criteria for rating. Parents and teachers were also asked to rank the three goals they found most important for gifted children.

The results of this study showed no significant differences between parent and teacher ratings on importance of each goal, school's responsibility in meeting each goal, and ranking of goals.

Both the majority of parents and teachers rated all the goals a 3 (much) or 4 (great) on importance. They also rated the school's responsibility a 3 (much) or 4 (great) with the exception of Environment, Health, and Art, which received several ratings of 1 (little) and 2 (some).

Parents and teachers were very similar in their choice of rankings. Both groups ranked Self-Esteem as the goal of number-one importance.

There was a significant difference found on five of the eleven goals when each goal was rated on importance and responsibility. Four of the five goals in which significance was established were the same for both groups (see Table 4, page 38). This suggested a positive correlation may exist between the two categories.

Discussion and Implications

There were no significant differences found on three of the four questions posed at the beginning of this

study. There are several possible reasons for this. One factor that may have influenced this finding was the sample size. Although all qualifying districts in the Second Congressional District with the exception of one participated in the study, the actual number of participants was only thirty-six. This caused a statistical problem. Several cells in the cross tabulations had five or fewer responses which can result in false significant differences. Therefore, to alleviate that possibility, a significance level of .01 was chosen.

Another possible reason for finding no significant differences was the questionnaire used. The choice of ratings given for each goal may not have been sensitive enough to determine the respondents' attitudes toward each goal. This could have been caused by the number of ratings given (five as opposed to eight or ten) or by the values placed on each rating (none, little, some, much and great).

Although no significant differences were found on three of the four questions posed, there were some interesting findings related to these questions. These findings involved the great similarity of responses by parents and teachers. Both groups ranked Self-Esteem as the number-one educational goal for gifted children. They also rated goals such as Communication and Thinking as high priorities. Goals dealing with Science and Socioeconomics received much lower ratings. This seems to imply that parents and

teachers are placing much more value on the affective domain of education rather than the academic domain. This concurs with Beery's (1977) findings when investigating parents' and teachers' attitudes toward educational goals. He also found that parents and teachers are placing more value on the affective areas and are shifting the academics to a lower priority.

When Dembinski and Mauser (1978) conducted a study involving parents of gifted children, they asked them to rank recommendations to teachers. Three recommendations in the top seven also dealt with the affective domain. Parents wanted to know: (1) if their child gets along with others, (2) if their child gets in trouble, and (3) if their child has any special adjustment problems. These findings could have strong implications for program planning both now and in the future. How much time in a school day is spent on values and communication as opposed to science and math? Parents of gifted seem to be saying they want a switch in emphasis.

Parents also seem to feel the school is less responsible for the educational goals presented than teachers do. They had a higher percentage rate of 2 (some) on seven of the goals, while teachers only had a higher percentage rate of 2 (some) on one goal. It seems these parents feel they have more responsibility in helping their children achieve goals than teachers feel they do. This

was implied in the review of the literature. Parents want to be actively involved in their children's education (Beery, 1977; Dembinski & Mauser, 1978).

This idea was further strengthened by the high return rate of over 84 percent received from parents. It seems apparent that parents are no longer willing to let the schools make all the educational decisions concerning their children. They want to let their opinions be known. Teachers, with a return rate of 100 percent, also showed a great interest in letting their opinions be known.

A summation of the data received in this study seems to imply that parents and teachers in the East Tennessee area are in general agreement on the importance of educational goals for gifted and on the school's responsibility for meeting these goals. They also appear to believe the affective goals are a higher priority than the academic goals.

Recommendations

The findings of this study lead to the inclusion of several recommendations that should be considered before future studies of this nature are conducted. The following are a list of these recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the questionnaire be expanded. It should include more specific goals on academic areas, questions directly

related to home and school communication, and amount of direct parent involvement in the schools. It is strongly recommended that the categories of importance and school's responsibility be expanded to include a category for rating how well the school is actually fulfilling its responsibilities. The expansion of the questionnaire could possibly lead to more significant differences between groups.

2. It is recommended a larger sample should be used in order to produce adequate numbers for proper statistical analyses. This recommendation could also aid in finding significant differences between groups. It would reduce the chances of producing cells of five or less respondents in running cross tabulations.
3. It is recommended that demographic questions be restated with similar information asked of both groups. The demographic data gathered for this study were not analyzed. There were two reasons for this: One reason being the sample size. It was too small to group people of similar occupations, educations, etc. Another reason was the type of questions asked of teachers and parents. They were too different in nature to provide any type of comparisons between groups.

Individual groups were too small to provide adequate comparisons. Similar information concerning socioeconomic status, type of area in which respondents reside (rural, urban, suburban) and type of gifted program they are involved in could possibly create very interesting comparisons.

Conclusions

It is believed that further investigation of this study, following the recommendations stated, could produce some very relevant and needed information. With the trend in education today becoming a team approach, it is going to be necessary to know the attitudes and needs of all members of these teams. Only through open communication can the needs of the teachers and parents and, most of all, the children be met.

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APPENDIX

Educational Goal Survey

Please completely fill in the circle surrounding a number which indicates your opinion of the importance and of the responsibility the school has in helping the home to educate students toward each goal. Thank you.

SCALE
4 = Great
3 = Much
2 = Some
1 = Little
0 = None

	IMPORTANCE OF GOAL	SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY
1. Respect for Others The student is learning to respect the rights, feelings and cultures of others; to work cooperatively; to enjoy others.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
2. Self-Esteem The student is learning to feel unique and valuable, to feel confident, to enjoy self when alone or in a group.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
3. Learning The student is learning to be open-minded, to accept challenges, to explore, to become absorbed, to enjoy learning.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
4. Work The student is learning to take initiative, to organize, to follow through, to self-evaluate, to take pride in work.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
5. Environment The student is learning to enjoy and protect nature, to respect personal and public property.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
6. Thinking The student is learning to think objectively, creatively, logically, critically, and positively.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
7. Communication The student is learning to listen, speak, read, spell, and write effectively.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
8. Science The student is learning to use mathematics and scientific methods in problem-solving.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
9. Socioeconomics The student is learning to understand and use principles of history, government, economics, and money management.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
10. Health The student is learning to eat, sleep, exercise, and dress adequately; to practice personal hygiene; to participate in sports.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
11. Arts The student is learning to enjoy music, art, literature, and dance.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
12. Other:	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④

Please rank the three educational goals from above you feel are the most important for a special child: one being the most important.

1._____ 2._____ 3._____

Comments:_____

_____

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is the highest degree you have obtained?_____
2. What area is the degree or degrees in?_____
3. Give the date of the last educational courses taken._____
4. How many years of teaching experience do you have?_____
5. How many years of teaching experience with special children?_____

Educational Goal Survey

Please completely fill in the circle surrounding a number which indicates your opinion of the importance and of the responsibility the school has in helping the home to educate students toward each goal. Thank you.

SCALE
4 = Great
3 = Much
2 = Some
1 = Little
0 = None

	IMPORTANCE OF GOAL	SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY
1. Respect for Others Your child is learning to respect the rights, feelings and cultures of others; to work cooperatively; to enjoy others.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
2. Self-Esteem Your child is learning to feel unique and valuable, to feel confident, to enjoy self when alone or in a group.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
3. Learning Your child is learning to be open-minded, to accept challenges, to explore, to become absorbed, to enjoy learning.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
4. Work Your child is learning to take initiative, to organize, to follow through, to self-evaluate, to take pride in work.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
5. Environment Your child is learning to enjoy and protect nature, to respect personal and public property.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
6. Thinking Your child is learning to think objectively, creatively, logically, critically, and positively.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
7. Communication Your child is learning to listen, speak, read, spell, and write effectively.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
8. Science Your child is learning to use mathematics and scientific methods in problem-solving.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
9. Socioeconomics Your child is learning to understand and use principles of history, government, economics, and money management.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
10. Health Your child is learning to eat, sleep, exercise, and dress adequately; to practice personal hygiene; to participate in sports.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
11. Arts Your child is learning to enjoy music, art, literature, and dance.	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④
12. Other:	⓪①②③④	⓪①②③④

Please rank the three educational goals from above that you feel are the most important for a special child: 1 being the most important.

1._____ 2._____ 3._____

Comments:_____

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is your occupation?
   Father_____
   Mother_____

2. How many years of education have you completed?
   _____ fewer than 12 years
   _____ 12-14 years
   _____ 15-16 years
   _____ 17 years or more

4. Your special child is male_____ or female_____

Special thanks to Dr. Keith Beery of San Rafael, California, for the use of his "Educational Goal Survey."

VITA

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