

Gifted Education Research 1994–2003: A Disconnect Between Priorities and Practice

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This research project employs a historical methodology to analyze and characterize the growth of the knowledge base in gifted education following the U.S. Department of Education's (1993) report, National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent. Topical priorities and descriptors of inquiry are compared against the recommendations of the National Excellence report. During the 10-year period from 1994 to 2003, a disconnect is evidenced between recommendations and actual research priorities and practices.

Research and interest both political and social have surged and faltered since the inception of the field of gifted education in the early 20th century, and public perceptions of gifted education range from its critical need to its elitist luxury. Furthermore, scholars in the field continue to discuss the need for a well-established research base on which to build practices (Coleman et al., 2003; McCoach et al., 2003). According to Coleman and Cross (2005), "The educational establishment is responsible for the . . . lack of long-term research on educational practices for the gifted" (p. 266). Regardless of where responsibility lies, rigorous examination of a field's research is a way to identify critical priorities and practices. In this particular study, the relationship between recommendations made in *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) and the field's research priorities is examined between 1994–2003.

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At the beginning of the 20th century, gifted education emerged as a natural extension of the new field of educational psychology. Educational psychology initially grew out of the interplay between the new science of psychology and educational objectives in the early 20th century. The research conducted by educational psychologists was intended to inform educational practices (Lagemann, 2000). A by-product of this new field was the implementation of the recently developed intelligence test for schools to identify students who would benefit from a “qualitatively different education” to meet their intellectual capacity (Lagemann, 2000).

During the 1920s, Lewis Terman and Leta Stetter Hollingworth, pioneers in the field of gifted education, began their seminal research studies on gifted children. Both believed in the tremendous power of science and how it could improve and influence education. “Educational evangelism may be all right in its place but it is a poor substitute for science in the search for truth” (Terman, 1928, p. 371). Hollingworth’s and Terman’s initial research agenda built upon the foundational work of Francis Galton and Alfred Binet, extending their work on heredity, intelligence, and characteristics (Jolly, 2004).

This same era witnessed progressive educators advocating for appropriate educational opportunities for gifted children. Private grants from organizations such as the Commonwealth Fund and monies and manpower from both public school entities and universities helped fund these seminal research studies. This convergence of public interest, research agendas, and funding allowed for a baseline of research to be established. However, as the field continued to grow, a systematic and organized research agenda “that connect[s] studies to one another and provides a basis for sound generalizations that can be made in policy and practice arenas” (VanTassel-Baska, 2006a, p. 339) along with a serious commitment from the federal government to fund such research failed to emerge.

Eventually, the Great Depression and World War II shifted priorities away from education, and gifted education quietly limped along until the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957. Paranoia, fear, and a genuine concern brought a renewed effort to identify, educate, and mobilize the United States’ most promising young students in order to combat a perceived intellectual threat from the Soviet

Union. This also marked the federal government's first large-scale mobilization of resources through The National Defense Education Act of 1958 to foster the talent and development of gifted students (Colangelo & Davis, 2003; Delisle, 1999; Passow, 1986; Roberts, 1999). After Sputnik, a 10-year cyclical interest in gifted education began to emerge, with funding and support declining and rising according to political and general public support (Tannenbaum, 1983). The momentum of Sputnik was usurped by the Civil Rights movement and changing educational priorities. In 1972, efforts from the U.S. Department of Education placed gifted education on the national agenda again with the issuance of the Marland Report (Marland, 1972). The Marland Report identified serious inadequacies in education for America's most bright and talented students. The most enduring legacy of the Marland Report was the first national definition of giftedness (Delisle, 1999). However, gifted education once again slipped under the national radar. In 1983, the issuance of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education) challenged many areas of practice within American education. In particular, the report made international accountability an issue, comparing scores of America's brightest students and their international counterparts. The report also highlighted policies and practices in gifted education (Roberts, 1999). Once more, national attention turned toward policies and practices in gifted education, raising academic standards and promoting appropriate curriculum for gifted learners (Roberts, 1999).

In 1988, the U.S. Congress passed the Javits Act to provide research monies for gifted education, which also coincided with the establishment of the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (Imbeau, 1999). The *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent* report followed in 1993. Issued by the U.S. Department of Education, this report outlined research and programming recommendations for America's most talented students. This article specifically seeks to examine the influence of the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report on gifted education research and the field's response to such suggestions.

The National Excellence Report

In 1993, the U.S. Department of Education released *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent*, which proposed to examine the state of gifted education in American schools. The report stated that America was “squandering one of its most precious resources—the gifts, talents, and high interests of many of its students” (p. 3). Furthermore, students were not being challenged in their schoolwork and adequacy replaced excellence as the measure of school success, reiterating the findings from *A Nation at Risk* (VanTassel-Baska & Little, 2003). The problems of squandered talent were even more evident among economically disadvantaged and minority students due to fewer advanced educational opportunities. The report also highlighted American students' poor standing in comparison to their international counterparts. This poor standing was true not only for the general school population but also for America's most talented students when compared to the most talented students of other countries. Moreover, the report found that most gifted and talented students spent their days without any special attention given to their cognitive needs. A consequence of such unchallenging curriculum was the underachievement of many gifted students (U.S. Department of Education, 1993).

Table 1 outlines the recommendations made by the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report to improve educational opportunities for gifted and talented students. In 1993, definitions of giftedness, along with identification procedures and criteria, varied widely from state to state. Despite the lack of a uniform definition or identification procedures, more students were being identified and served in gifted programs. However, problems of underrepresentation among minority groups and economically disadvantaged students persisted. The report indicated a recent trend in budget cuts among state and local gifted programs and also suggested areas of needed research and increased programming (see Table 2).

These recommendations were intended to serve as a foundational research agenda for the field of gifted education. Only one study has been published in which the researchers compared the recommendations of the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report to the actual practices in the field of gifted education.

Table 1
**National Excellence Report Recommendations
for America's Top Students**

Improvement of Educational Opportunities

- Set challenging curriculum standards
 - Provide more challenging opportunities to learn
 - Increase access to early childhood education
 - Increase learning opportunities for disadvantaged and minority children with outstanding talents
 - Broaden the definition of giftedness
 - Emphasize teacher development
 - Match world performance
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Note. From *National Excellence Report*, by the U.S. Department of Education (1993).

Landrum, Katsiyannis, and DeWaard (1998) concentrated on policy trends in gifted education in response to the *National Excellence* report. In particular, they examined how the field of gifted education responded to the specific recommendations in regard to educational policies and legislation. This study examines how gifted education, between 1994 and 2003, responded to the recommended agenda of the *National Excellence* report. Specifically, what are the major topics that characterize the published research in gifted education? What modes of inquiry are most prominent in the published research in gifted education? How do these topics and modes of research relate to the national agenda? Answering these questions provides current researchers a foundation on which to build future research agendas.

Methodology

This study is both descriptive and historical in nature. Descriptive analysis was used to categorize the research strands that evolved from the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report. A historical method was used to study gifted education research over

Table 2***National Excellence Report Research Recommendations***

Areas of Research

1. Educators must develop assessment procedures based on standards that accurately measure the accomplishments of students who perform at the highest levels.
2. Schools must assess students' levels of competence in the regular school curriculum in each of the core subjects and provide alternative learning opportunities for students who have mastered them.
3. Communities must establish programs that work with parents and other primary caregivers to help them nurture the talents of their children and help them achieve in school.
4. Schools must establish a system of communication between preschools and elementary schools to ensure that student strengths identified in preschool continue to be nurtured in elementary school.
5. Communities must train preschool teachers how to identify and develop strengths in children.
6. The nation must support research and demonstration projects working to develop talent in diverse populations.
7. Schools must eliminate barriers to participation of economically disadvantaged and minority students in services for students with outstanding talents.
8. The nation must conduct research on challenging curriculum, assessment standards, and successful teaching strategies.
9. Schools must conduct training sessions for teachers on how to provide challenging curriculum and varied learning opportunities that accommodate the different needs of children.
10. The nation must provide sufficient financial support from federal, state, and local governments, as well as the private sector, to carry out these actions.
11. The nation must study and learn from education policies and practices of nations whose top students perform well.
12. The nation must ensure that tests of international comparisons provide accurate data on top-performing students around the world.

Note. From *National Excellence Report* by the U.S. Department of Education (1993).

a specified period of time (Thomas, 2003). "History [can] mean a discipline, a field of study that has developed a set of methods and concepts by which historians can collect evidence of past events, evaluate that evidence, and present a coherent and meaningful discussion of it" (Shafer & Bennett, 1980, pp. 2–3). As a subset of the historical method, this history also seeks to evaluate the response by the field of gifted education through published research in the primary research journals of the field to the recommendations of the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 2003) report. Published research characterizes the attentions and activities of scholars within a field or discipline, additionally indicating the flow of funding dollars and reflecting priorities of grant-making bodies.

Sample

Engaging in historical investigation requires the researchers to make decisions about what qualifies as evidence and how to interpret the evidence that has been identified. Articles were collected from a 10-year period following the publication of the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report, 1994–2003. Three journals were chosen for review in this project: *Gifted Child Quarterly*, *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, and *Roeper Review*. These three journals represent the two largest national organizations with a commitment to gifted education, *Gifted Child Quarterly* (National Association for Gifted Children) and *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* (The Association for the Gifted, Council for Exceptional Children). *Roeper Review* was selected because of its 25-year history and practice of including peer-reviewed research. Circulation data also indicate that all three are widely read among researchers in the field of gifted education (*Gifted Child Quarterly*, 7,182; *Roeper Review*, 2,000; *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 1,200; Olszewski-Kubilius et al., 2004). We do not claim that these three journals include the entire data base of research in gifted education in the United States, but we do believe they are a representative sample of the research published during the time period. Journals outside of the field were not considered, as researchers in gifted education typically publish in the field's own journals (Robinson, 2006). During a 15-month period, the authors reviewed published research articles

from the three journals for the years 1994–2003. A total of 725 articles were reviewed, and 397 of the 725 articles met the methodology standard to be fully considered as evidence for this investigation.

Procedure and Data Analysis

Articles underwent four levels of review in the analysis process. The levels of review are described below:

- *Level 1 Review*
 - **Critical Question:** Is the article a research article?
 - **Definition of Research:** The Best and Kahn (1993) definition was used: “Research may be defined as the systematic and objective analysis and recording of controlled observations that may lead to the development of generalizations, principles, or theories, resulting in prediction and possibly ultimate control of events” (p. 20).
 - **Criteria:** To be considered a research publication for the analysis in the study, the article had to contain a methodology section describing how the author(s) systematically collected and recorded data.

- *Level 2 Review*
 - **Critical Question:** What key words have been assigned to the article or could subsequently be assigned to the article?
 - Very few articles already had been assigned key words. In cases where key words were not assigned by the author or editor, both researchers read the article and assigned them.
 - The number of key words per article ranged from one to five, with three being the median number of key words per article.

- *Level 3 Review*
 - **Critical Question:** What was the mode of inquiry used in the study?
 - The mode of inquiry represents the research logic connecting the study to the larger knowledge base in gifted education. Three modes of inquiry were identified. All of the research studies were classified into these three categories: descriptive

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- study, instrument or model validation, and experimental/quasi-experimental study.
 - Frequency counts of each mode of inquiry were tabulated.
 - *Level 4 Review*
 - Critical Question 1: If it was a descriptive inquiry, what was being described?
 - Critical Question 2: If it was a validation inquiry, was a theory or an instrument being validated?
 - Critical Question 3: If it was an experimental or quasi-experimental inquiry, what effects were being measured?

Internal consistency of analyses was conducted using two levels of review. Both researchers conducted Level 1 review individually. A section describing the methodology was evidence of systematic data collection. Evidence of the research process included the following headings within the text of the article: Method(s), Methodology, Data Collection, and Research Design. Every article published in the three journals was classified with a yes or no in response to the critical question for Level 1. Articles classified as no were generally theoretical or opinion essays that did not include systematic data collection or observations.

Level 2 reviews were conducted collectively between the two researchers when the articles were not previously assigned key words. Each researcher read each article and made a list of key words to describe the contents of the study. In cases where common key words were listed, those were assigned without further discussion. In cases where researchers provided unique key words, discussion ensued between the two researchers regarding the main idea of the study until agreement was reached. A list of key words was generated, and, when a key word was generated that was synonymous with a previous key word, the synonymous term was used for the new key word. Initial agreement between the two reviewers occurred on 60% of the words. The remaining 40% of the key words were generated through discussion and agreement.

Results

To answer the question of what topics have been most prominent in the field of gifted education in the years 1994–2003, each article was assigned key words, and a frequency count was conducted for all key words. Key words emerged from the data rather than from predetermined categories or assumptions (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006) from the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report. A purpose of this study was to extract the major topics that characterized the research and identify whether they matched the priorities offered by the report. Of the 397 articles, there were a total of 841 key words. Examples of key words included: ethnicity, creativity, high school, leadership, grouping, mathematics, and social and emotional (see Table 3).

The most prominent key words were the following: gender (69), ethnicity (58), self-concept (44), social-emotional (38), and identification (37). Key words were further grouped into 10 categories: special populations (196), psychosocial (149), measurement (119), teaching and instruction (116), school settings (65), intellect and abilities (61), curriculum (56), community (38), special programs (29), and program and policy (23).

To answer the question of which modes of inquiry have been most prominent in the field of gifted education in the years 1994–2003, each article was given an inquiry description. Modes of inquiry were identified to help further reveal the way the field responded to the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report. There were a total of 397 articles; therefore, 397 descriptors were recorded. Descriptors were terms for phrases agreed upon by the research team upon reading each article. These descriptors characterized the primary issue being addressed by the research being reported. Articles also were assigned to one of three research designs: descriptive study, instrument or model validation, and experimental/quasi-experimental study. Of the articles published, 83.6% were descriptive research articles, 10.8% were validation studies, and 5.5% were experimental/quasi-experimental studies (see Table 4).

Table 3
Categories and Frequencies of Key Words

Broad Category	Key Word	Frequency	
Special Populations (196)	Gender	69	
	Ethnicity	58	
	Adolescents	33	
	Learning Disabled	17	
	Economic Disadvantage	13	
	Disabled	3	
	Sexual Orientation	2	
	Language Diversity	1	
	Psychosocial Needs (149)	Self-Concept	44
		Social-Emotional	38
Motivation		11	
Behavior Problems		10	
Student Perception		9	
Attitudes		8	
Adjustment		6	
Perfectionism		6	
Social Structures		6	
Personality		3	
Measurement (119)	Suicide	3	
	Peers	3	
	Stereotyping	2	
	Identification	37	
	Achievement/Success	30	
	Assessment	27	
	Underachievement	17	
Talent	4		
Teaching and Instruction (116)	Underrepresentation	3	
	Video Game Performance	1	
	Teachers	21	
	Differentiation	13	
	Problem Solving	13	
	Teacher Training	12	
	Higher Order Thinking Skills	11	
	Choice	10	
	Teaching Strategies	9	
	Grouping	8	
	Cooperative Learning	6	
	Enrichment	6	
Learning Preferences	4		
Problem-Based Learning	2		
Program Transitions	1		

Broad Category	Key Word	Frequency
School Settings (65)	Middle School	12
	Elementary	11
	High School	11
	College	8
	Preschool	7
	Heterogeneous Classrooms	6
	Urban	4
	Rural	3
	Kindergarten	2
	Suburban	1
Intellect and Abilities (61)	Creativity	28
	Cognition	9
	Artistic Giftedness	8
	Conceptions of Giftedness	5
	Multiple Intelligences	5
	Precocity	4
	Intelligence	2
Curriculum (56)	Mathematics	17
	Language Arts	16
	Science	15
	Curriculum	8
Community (38)	Family/Parents	34
	Collaboration	4
Special Programs (29)	Leadership	10
	Early Entrance	8
	Summer Programs	4
	Counseling	4
	Mentors	3
Program and Policy (23)	Policy	10
	Advocacy	8
	Office of Civil Rights	3
	Program Evaluation	2

Note. Numbers in parentheses are total frequency counts for each category.

Discussion

The most prevalent topics of study within gifted education between 1994–2003 that characterized the published research (see Table 3) are special populations, and, more specifically, issues of gender and ethnicity. Psychosocial needs frequently appeared with a particular emphasis on self-concept and social and emotional issues of gifted

Table 4
Mode of Inquiry and Frequency

<i>Category</i>	<i>Mode of Inquiry</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Descriptive <i>n</i> = 332 (83.6%)	Aspects of Giftedness	119
	Comparing Nonintellective Traits	42
	Differences Between Gifted and Nongifted	40
	Practices	38
	Program Evaluation	27
	Aspects of Teachers	16
	Perspectives of Parents	12
	Comparing Perspectives	12
	Perspectives of Students	8
	Advocacy	7
	State Policies	6
Validation <i>n</i> = 43 (10.8%)	Perspectives of Teachers	5
	Instrument	30
Experimental/Quasi- Experimental <i>n</i> = 22 (5.5%)	Model or Theory	13
	Effects of Instruction	9
	Effects of Program	7
	Effects of Teacher Training	6

individuals. Identification of gifted students and creativity also appear regularly as key words.

Prominent topics in school improvement literature, such as language diversity and economically disadvantaged students, are virtually nonexistent in the research literature on gifted education. For instance, special populations is the most prominent broad category, yet *language diversity* only appeared as a key word one time in the 397 articles reviewed. This finding is surprising, given that increased language diversity is a growing concern among many school professionals.

Bearing in mind the rise of the accountability movement, measuring achievement and/or success is a topic that does not receive as much attention as would be expected. As resources and emphasis are flowing toward areas where success can be quantified and ana-

lyzed, researchers in gifted education have produced relatively few reports on how achievement can or should be measured for gifted students across subjects and grade levels. Some would argue that the topic is too illusive for study and does not apply well to the field of gifted education. Others warn that without accountability measures of achievement, local, state, and federal resources will surely dwindle (Baker, 2001).

The category of teaching and instruction is the fourth most prominent topic in the key word frequency count. In fact, key words associated with teaching and instruction account for less than one third of the categorized topics. Specific teaching strategies account for only a fraction of those in the broader category of teaching and instruction. Furthermore, curriculum is the 8th most prominent topic in the list of 10 categories. From 1994–2003, researchers in gifted education were more likely to write about student perceptions and attitudes than any single subject area of curriculum. When the curriculum category is further dissected, mathematics is the most prominent area of study, while *social studies* does not appear once as a key word. Perhaps the lack of research on teaching and instruction is indicative of a growing divide between those who conduct research in gifted education and practitioners who work daily in classrooms with gifted students.

The second research question, investigating modes of inquiry (see Table 3) used in gifted research, reveals descriptive inquiry clearly dominating the published research literature of gifted education. The most common descriptor of inquiry between 1994 and 2003 described aspects of gifted individuals, including how they differ from each other and their nongifted peers. The descriptor *aspects of giftedness* was by far the most prominent having almost three times the frequency count of the second most prominent (*comparing non-intellective traits*). The aspects of giftedness category included studies dedicated to describing the experiences of gifted students, general characteristics of gifted students, and choices and attitudes of gifted students. Areas of choice include career choices, curriculum choices, and extracurricular choices. This result indicates a fixation on the phenomena associated with being gifted. One has to question the impact such research projects have on the practice of gifted education. A comparative example using the field of medicine would yield

a plethora of research studies regarding symptoms of cancer patients, but little or no research on effective methods of treatment for the disease. If the practice of gifted education is to improve, the research base must shift from describing the phenomena of giftedness to identifying and verifying best practices for gifted education.

Despite many of the recommendations made by the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report on the benefits of intervention studies, they are negligible in gifted education research. Of the 397 descriptions of inquiry, only 22 described intervention studies in which the effects of instruction or programming were measured. Intervention studies are developed with the goal of improving practices; they represent the praxis of a field's knowledge base. Why are intervention studies so infrequently published in the literature of gifted education? What effect does the lack of praxis have on a professional practice? These questions deserve discussion among the scholars in the field of gifted education.

Program administrators look to practice-oriented research to make programming decisions. In many cases, these administrators rely on the literature of general education to supply program guidelines. Classic examples include the current emphasis on enrichment, mixed-ability grouping, and cooperative learning. These are three areas that are still widely advocated in programming yet are not well-supported by gifted education research studies. At this time, this is just a hypothesized effect of the lack of intervention studies in the field, and certainly further investigation is needed to substantiate this supposition.

One area of interest for this study was to look at the evidence of research priorities and compare them to the proposed research agenda presented in the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report. The area of research that seems most similar to the priorities of the report involves disadvantaged and minority students with outstanding talents. The published research in gifted education has given significant attention to the topic of ethnicity and slight to economic disadvantage.

The *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report recommended that challenging curriculum standards need to be set and gifted students need to be provided more challenging opportunities to learn. Of the 10 topical clusters that emerged in the

analysis, curriculum was ranked 7th in prominence. Mathematics, language arts, and science were equally addressed, but other areas of curriculum such as social studies (history, government, and economics) or languages other than English failed to be addressed by the research. Recommendations 5 and 6 both addressed increased involvement at the preschool level with training to identify and develop strengths of preschoolers and the establishment of systems to communicate these strengths to elementary school teachers. A total of seven, or 1.75%, of the articles addressed these recommendations. Recommendations 12 and 13 sought a better understanding of other nations' assessment and teaching practices and policies of their top students. There are no articles that address either of these recommendations.

A mismatch exists between the recommended areas of research in the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report and the evidenced priorities of gifted education research. The *National Excellence* report could be characterized as focusing on achievement and excellence; the research in gifted education during this period focused on equity and social and psychological issues of gifted individuals. Looking at the key word frequency counts, all of those added together still do not equal the prominence given to gender, ethnicity, self-concept, or social-emotional issues.

Limitations to the Field

Javits Grants under the umbrella of the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program provide the main (if limited) source of funding for gifted education research, including the establishment of the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

The purpose of this program is to carry out a coordinated program of scientifically based research, demonstration projects, innovative strategies, and similar activities designed to build and enhance the ability of elementary and secondary schools to meet the special education needs of gifted and talented students. The major emphasis of the program is on serving students traditionally underrepresented in gifted and talented programs, particularly economically disadvantaged,

limited English proficient (LEP), and disabled students, to help reduce the serious gap in achievement among certain groups of students at the highest level of achievement. (U.S. Department of Education, n.d., ¶1)

However, only Recommendation 8 from the *National Excellence* (U.S. Department of Education, 1993) report specifically addressed economically and disadvantaged students. In a review of Javits grant abstracts from 1996–2003, only 8 of the 57 grant awards did not have a specific reference to underserved, disadvantaged, or LEP students. Five of the grants included preschoolers in their target populations while no grant monies were awarded to examine other nations' gifted and talented programs. Research outside the areas of underserved populations is limited by the dollars allocated to such studies. The Javits Grants project objectives clearly do not have the same priorities as the recommendations from *Nation Excellence* report. Nor has sufficient financial support been provided as the report recommended.

The editorial process also plays a role in what becomes published research. As a part of an editor's duties, he or she is responsible for identifying research trends and including manuscripts that reflect such trends. However, researchers ultimately decide what is published, as they produce the manuscripts and also sit in review of potential articles.

Conclusion

Research on the published research of a field is a clear window into the priorities of those conducting inquiries in that discipline. Analysis of the research is often limited to single topic studies such as meta-analyses or research reviews. In this case, the investigation looked broadly at the topics that have been most prominent in the research of gifted education at the close of the 20th century. The distinct research program of gifted education has been present for more than 80 years, and still the dominant area of inquiry is describing the phenomena of giftedness. "A Report Card on the State of Research in the Field of Gifted Education" (VanTassel-Baska, 2006b) cited that the field has presented strong evidence in the areas of acceleration

but has lagged in fulfilling other research topics. What little research monies the field does receive are earmarked for “underserved minorities” (Robinson, 2006, p. 344), leaving gifted education researchers to conduct studies in most cases with little funding. This lack of funding yields studies that suffer from sampling issues that make replication impossible (Robinson, 2006). Gifted education researchers must reevaluate the types of research topics studied in the field, develop studies that are generalizable and practical, and collaborate with other fields of study such as biology, sociology, and psychology (Coleman, 2006; Robinson, 2006; Shore, 2006; Subotnik, 2006; VanTassel-Baska, 2006b).

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