

An Examination of Articles in Gifted Education and Multicultural Education Journals

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An analysis of gifted education and multicultural education journals was performed to identify the number of multicultural education articles in gifted education journals and the number of gifted education articles in multicultural education journals. Journals reviewed were Multicultural Education, Multicultural Perspectives, Urban Education, Gifted Child Quarterly, Journal for the Education of the Gifted, and Roeper Review (1995 to 2004). Issues related to multicultural education are discussed in gifted education journals, but issues related to gifted education are largely neglected in multicultural education journals. Implications are that policy makers in the two fields need to discuss ways to infuse issues related to gifted education into the discourse on multicultural education.

Multiculturalists in the field of gifted education, such as Alexinia Baldwin, Donna Ford, Mary Frasier, Margie Kitano, and others, have been instrumental in discussing gifted minority and diversity issues in gifted education. As an example, Ford, Baytops, and Harmon (1997) highlighted the scarcity of articles related to gifted minority students. They found that for 9,801 articles on gifted education in the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database from 1966 to 1996, only 795 articles (8%) addressed gifted minority students.

In this paper, the number of gifted education articles in multicultural education journals and the number of multicultural education articles in gifted education journals from 1995 to 2004 is reported. Implications for future policy to facilitate the relationship between these two dimensions of research are presented.

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Defining Multicultural Education

Banks and Banks (2001) defined multicultural education as

An idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school. (p. 1)

Thus, multicultural education may be interwoven throughout various curricula and disciplines. Ford and Grantham (1996) defined multicultural education as,

A philosophy that is based on the fundamental belief that all people must be accorded respect, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status (SES), religion, physical ability, and mental ability. It is predicated on the belief that all people have intrinsic worth. (p. 73)

Multicultural education may mean different things to different people (Gorski, 2000), and it is associated with terms such as equal opportunity, pluralism in ethnicities and cultures, and a respect for differences. Consequently, multicultural education has been viewed as the vehicle to reduce many of the injustices in education as it promotes social justice (National Association for Multicultural Education [NAME], 2003).

Articles in multicultural education journals are varied in their focus. Common topics that are covered in multicultural education journals are culture (Ferguson, 2003; Rueda, Monzó, & Higareda, 2004; Williams, 2004), gender (Montecinos & Nielsen, 2004; Clark & Gorski, 2002), culture-gender (Davis, 2003; Fashola, 2003), socioeconomic status (Moore & Moore, 2003; Reay, 2004), and sexual orientation (Akintunde, 2004; McCarthy, 2003). Articles with an emphasis on culture-gender are articles that focus on both topics rather than merely one topic (e.g., African American females).

Defining Gifted Education

Relative to defining gifted education, it appears as though considerably more attention has gone into conceptualizing giftedness. Mönks, Heller, and Passow (2000) regarded gifted education as

... educational settings and learning environments that make available opportunities for students to acquire the knowledge, insights, skills, understandings, motivation, interest, values, and other learning that will enable them to perform at high levels of excellence that might be described as gifted or talented. (p. 846)

Though not a definition per se, Feldhusen (2003) discussed the responsibility of gifted education when he stated that the task is to “. . . help each youngster utilize his or her emerging talents, aptitudes, and capabilities to the fullest extent in order to achieve career success and personal fulfillment at the highest possible level” (p. 34).

Much like articles in multicultural education journals, the focus of articles in gifted education journals is varied. For instance, topics that are often covered in gifted education journals are gifts (Cramond, 2004; Hartnett, Nelson, & Rinn, 2004), talents (Newman, 2005; Worrell & Schaefer, 2004), intellect (Gottfried & Gottfried, 1996; Mayer, 2001), achievement (Grantham, 2004; Olszewski-Kubilius, Lee, Ngoi, & Ngoi, 2004), and academic performance (Adams-Byers, Whitsell, & Moon, 2004; Taylor & Nikolova, 2004).

In 1996, Ford and Grantham called for gifted educators to increase the attention that they donate to multicultural education because, up to that point, it had received little consideration. As evidence of this problem, they claimed that a scarcity of literature existed on multicultural education in gifted education. In their article, they addressed issues such as the need for multicultural education, the components of multicultural education, and the implementation of multicultural education. Hence, this study is an update and extension of the seminal Ford and Grantham study by exploring not only the scope to which gifted education has embraced multicultural education but the degree to which multicultural education has embraced gifted education.

Current Study

The extent to which multicultural education has been inclusive of gifted education has not been questioned until recently (Chamberlin & Moore, 2006). However, the extent to which gifted education is inclusive of multicultural education has been questioned (Ford & Grantham, 1996). Hence, the current study was conducted to examine the frequency with which topics related to gifted education were included in journals in the multicultural education field and vice versa. Similar to Ford et al. (1997), a frequency count of journal articles in the respective fields was used to examine journals in the 10-year period, 1995 to 2004. Three specific questions were examined: (a) What were the total number of articles and mean number of articles per year to appear in each journal? (b) What percentage of articles per journal focused on topics from the other field? and (c) Did the number of articles from the respective fields increase or decrease from the first 5-year period to the second 5-year period?

Method

Data

In the current study, the author completed an analysis of three multicultural education and three gifted education journals from 1995 to 2004. Many journals were identified for review, but, to make the study manageable, the researcher sought three in each field. After careful consideration, *Gifted Child Quarterly* (GCQ), *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* (JEG), and *Roeper Review* (RR) were selected from gifted education. *Multicultural Perspectives* (MP), *Multicultural Education* (ME), and *Urban Education* (UE) were selected from multicultural education. According to Cabell and English (2006a), the *Gifted Child Today* review process is peer-reviewed but not blind, therefore it was not selected for this analysis. Also, Karnes and Nugent (2002) stated that the three selected journals are the three primary means of transmission of scholarly work in gifted education.

The Journal of Negro Education was eliminated because an overall portrait of multicultural education was sought rather than scholarly work on one minority. After eliminating *The Journal of Negro Education*, four journals remained that were identical to Cabell and English's (2006a, 2006b, 2006c) criteria. An expert at the author's institution selected *MP*, *ME*, and *UE* as the three journals most representative of multicultural education (A. Jaime, personal communication, February 2, 2005). Once the journals were selected, a frequency count of articles that pertained to key words was completed.

Procedure

Prior to the frequency count of articles, an analysis of all journal article titles from *GCQ*, *JEG*, *RR*, *MP*, *ME*, and *UE* from 1995 to 2004 was conducted to identify key words for each field. By looking at article titles from multicultural education and gifted education, key words were identified for use in searching the other type of journal. As an example, in multicultural education journal titles, five key words were identified: *culture*, *gender*, *culture-gender*, *socioeconomic status* (SES), and *sexual orientation*. Subsequently, these words were taken from the initial perusal of multicultural education journals and used in searching gifted education journals to identify articles that addressed multicultural education. The same process was completed with gifted education journals for use in searching multicultural education journals. The five key words were *gift*, *talent*, *intellect*, *achievement*, and *academic*. In each case, when the key words were found in the title, the respective abstract and article were read. Hard copies of the six journals were examined rather than electronic copies, and a count was kept of articles identified by either title or topics raised in the first few paragraphs.

Results

Gifted Education Articles in Multicultural Education Journals

Eight (0.9%) of the 877 articles in the three multicultural education journals had a focus on topics related to gifted education. From 1995

to 2004, *UE* printed seven articles on gifted education, *ME* printed one article, and *MP* failed to print an article on topics related to gifted education since the journal originated in 1999. Although the total number of years of multicultural education publications was short by 4 years, the loss of years was mathematically eliminated. *MP* would have needed to compile 10 editions of 14 articles each on gifted education to offset the lack of coverage of gifted education in the *UE* and *ME*. In terms of percent, 0.02% of *UE*'s, 0.003% of *ME*'s, and 0% of *MP*'s articles focused on topics related to gifted education. In the first 5-year period and the second 5-year period, multicultural education journals published four articles on topics related to gifted education (see Table 1).

Multicultural Education Articles in Gifted Education Journals

One hundred and forty-seven (15.7%) of the 937 articles in the three gifted education journals had a focus on topics related to multicultural education. From 1995 to 2004, *RR* published 63 articles, *GCQ* published 43 articles, and *JEG* published 41 articles on topics related to multicultural education. In terms of percent, 13% of *RR*'s, 17.6% of *GCQ*'s, and 19.7% of *JEG*'s articles focused on topics related to multicultural education. From the first 5-year period to the second 5-year period, gifted education journals had a decrease (77 to 70) in the number of articles with topics related to multicultural education (see Table 1).

Discussion

In 1999, Ford and Harris claimed that "Multicultural education is noticeably absent from gifted education" (p. xi). Analysis of the number of articles from 1995 to 2004 illustrates that multicultural education journals have poorly represented gifted education. In the same period, however, gifted education journals have represented multicultural education quite well.

Table 1
Articles Published in Journals 1995–2004

Journal year	Articles identified										Total articles reviewed	Mean per year		
	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04			1995–1999	2000–2004
<i>Multicultural Education</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	345	0.1
<i>Multicultural Perspectives</i>	N ^a	N ^a	N ^a	N ^a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	223	0.0
<i>Urban Education</i>	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	4	3	309	0.7
<i>Roeper Review</i>	13	8	6	8	2	15	3	4	1	3	37	26	484	6.3
<i>Journal for the Education of the Gifted</i>	5	3	3	8	2	5	5	5	5	0	21	20	208	4.1
<i>Gifted Child Quarterly</i>	4	5	4	3	3	4	6	5	5	4	19	24	245	4.3

Note. ^a indicates no data and is the result of the journal not being in publication (rather than not being searched). *Multicultural Perspectives* started publication in 1999.

Gifted Education Articles in Multicultural Education Journals

Unfortunately, the data reveal that gifted education is underrepresented in multicultural education. If the relationship between gifted education and multicultural education is to grow, multicultural education policy makers must invest more attention in topics related to gifted education.

The analysis of journal articles is but one way to analyze the relationship between multicultural and gifted education. Authors and researchers in the field of gifted education appear to view multicultural education as a critical component to success in promoting gifted education, but authors and researchers in the field of multicultural education may not hold the same perspective of gifted education as a critical component to success in multicultural education. By not discussing or providing examples of how gifted education has embraced multicultural education, experts in the field of multicultural education may perpetuate the myth that individuals of various cultures are not welcome in gifted education. This neglect is equally damaging to the fields of multicultural and gifted education.

Multicultural Education Articles in Gifted Education Journals

Efforts to promote diversity and multicultural education in the field of gifted education appear to be ongoing as illustrated by the data. For instance, grants are offered, such as the Minority Initiative for Gifted Scholars at Purdue University (Moon & Cleveland, 2001); symposia in gifted education to infuse topics related to multicultural education take place (e.g., a DISCOVER III presentation entitled "A Symposium on Culture-Fair, Intelligence-Fair Alternative Assessment for Identification of Gifted Individuals" presented at the 12th World Conference of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children in 1997); and, in 1993, the U.S. Department of Education's (1993) definition of giftedness was altered to include people of various cultures. Moreover, authors in gifted education have contributed nonjournal publications, such as Boothe and Stanley's (2004) book *In the Eyes of the Beholder: Critical Issues for Diversity in Gifted Education* and Ford and Harris' (1999) book *Multicultural Gifted Education*, that have discussed various cultures and their value to gifted education.

Implications

This research has two implications. The first implication is that leading researchers and policy makers in the field of multicultural education need to focus (some) research efforts on gifted education. In 2002, Ford, Harris, Tyson, and Trotman called for gifted educators to embrace multicultural education. It appears as though these efforts are underway by gifted educators. For a relationship to be established, multicultural educators need to embrace and value gifted educators as well.

By analyzing a cross-section (1995–2004) of journals in multicultural education, it appears that gifted education has been largely neglected in the field of multicultural education. Conversely, by analyzing a cross-section of journals in gifted education, it appears that multicultural education is important to the field of gifted education and, in fact, it has been embraced. If the field of multicultural education purports to represent and be a voice for exceptional students, as Banks and Banks (2001) stated, then it would make sense that researchers in multicultural education would focus some effort on gifted education.

The second implication is that gifted educators and multicultural educators need to discuss ways in which the two fields can work together on initiatives to infuse topics related to gifted education into multicultural education. It is unlikely that the lack of representation of gifted education in the field of multicultural education ends in journal publications. A perusal of initiatives in multicultural education to promote gifted education, such as grants, symposia, and books, yielded no results. Multicultural education emphasizes the reduction of injustice and the promotion of social justice in education (NAME, 2003). One example of an educational injustice is that gifted minorities may be perceived negatively by peers in urban environments (Holmes, 2003). Although this injustice is not directly attributable to the lack of gifted education articles in multicultural education journals, it may be possible that researchers in multicultural education could help reduce this stigma by working with gifted educators.

Limitations

The most significant limitation to this study is that only three journals from each field were used to count articles. Using these six journals did omit the use of well-known journals such as the *Journal of Negro Education*, *Urban Review*, *Journal of International Gifted Education*, *Gifted Child Today*, *Gifted Education International*, *Australasian Journal of Gifted Education*, *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*, and others. Another limitation is that representation was viewed by counting journal articles as Ford, Baytops, and Harmon did in 1997. Representation is much deeper than merely the number of journal articles, but this study was similar to their 1997 study.

Areas for Future Research

To document the extent to which areas of education discuss issues related to multicultural education, perhaps similar analysis should take place in other areas of education. Using the framework provided in this study, the relationship between multicultural education and special education could be investigated. Various disciplines of education could be analyzed as well. For instance, the relationship between multicultural education and mathematics could be investigated.

The contributions of experts such as Alexinia Baldwin, Donna Ford, Mary Frasier, Margie Kitano, and others have been instrumental in helping gifted education become a more comprehensive field than it was years ago. Data from this analysis reveal that gifted education has been successful in infusing topics related to multicultural education into the field of gifted education. Nevertheless, successfully infusing topics related to multicultural education into gifted education and the recruitment of minorities are not the same issue. A disconcerting notion is that the number of minorities in gifted education remains less than desirable, as it is currently unsatisfactory.

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