

Investigating the Intersection of Poverty and Race in Gifted Education Journals: A 15-Year Analysis

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Abstract

Using a two-phase content analysis approach, this study examined how education scholars have discussed the intersection of giftedness, race, and poverty in gifted academic journals from 2000 to 2015. Specifically, the authors explored the following questions: (a) What are the characteristics of studies published that explore the intersection of giftedness, poverty, and students of color? (b) How do scholars discuss and theorize about how to recruit and retain gifted students of color who come from families living in poverty? (c) In what ways do scholars discuss the intersection of race and poverty for gifted students of color? Findings indicated that while studies were focused on students of color, there was limited discussion about the impact of race and poverty on the recruitment and retention of gifted students of color who come from families living in poverty. Implications and future research are discussed.

Keywords

poverty, giftedness, race, students of color, gifted education, content analysis

Despite the United States' image of being the land of opportunity, for many children living in poverty, access to gifted education opportunities is often limited. For instance, Kena et al. (2016) found that approximately 20% of school-aged children come from families living in poverty, a 5% increase from 2000. Moreover, 14 states and the District of Columbia had poverty rates higher than the U.S. average. While the national picture provides one side of poverty trends, when looking at the data by race/ethnicity, it becomes more apparent which groups of students are disproportionately living in poverty. In 2014, Black (38%), American Indian/Alaska Native (35%), Hispanic (32%), and Pacific Islander (27%) students came from families living in poverty compared with 12% of White and Asian students (Kena et al., 2016). Although living in poverty does not define a child's ability to succeed in school, it can certainly have a significant impact on school performance and outcomes (Ford, Grantham, & Frazier-Trotman, 2007).

While Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native serve as the majority of students attending schools who come from families living in poverty, they are vastly underrepresented in gifted and talented programs (Ford, 2013). Most recent data from the Office of Civil Rights Data Collection (2015) for the 2011-2012 school year show that Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native students comprise 8.9%, 16.8%, and 1% of students in gifted and talented programs, respectively, compared with 59.9% of White students who, conversely, are overrepresented in gifted education programs. For nearly 80 years,

scholars have discussed in great detail the underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic students in gifted education regardless of their income level (see Baldwin, 1987; Ford, 2013; Ford, Whiting, Goings, & Alexander, 2017; Frasier, 1989; Jenkins, 1939).

More recently, scholars have begun to discuss educational access and outcomes for students who come from families living in poverty; seldom is this focus on students who are gifted. As a result, little is known about gifted students who live in poverty and even less is known about gifted students of color who come from low-income families (Ford, Grantham, & Whiting, 2008; Stambaugh & Wood, 2015; VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2007). Without this information, educators and families are challenged to identify and support this specific student population. Moreover, while scholars have advocated for the representation of gifted students living in poverty (Grantham, 2003; VanTassel-Baska, Johnson, & Avery, 2002; VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2007), it is important to take a macro view of the field of gifted education to analyze the ways in which scholars discuss the experiences of gifted students of color who live in

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poverty because this research informs gifted education practitioners about best practices for supporting and advocating for them. Importantly, while these students share needs associated with living in poverty, there are possibly different needs based on race and culture; thus exploring the body of research in this area will provide insight into these nuances.

The purpose of this article is to explore how education scholars have discussed the intersection of giftedness, race, and poverty in gifted academic journals from 2000 to 2015. Specifically, we focus on the following journals as they are solely devoted to gifted education: *Gifted Child Quarterly*, *Roeper Review*, *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *Journal of Advanced Academics* (titled *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education* prior to 2006), and *Gifted Child Today*. Our aim is to address the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of studies published that explore the intersection of giftedness, poverty, and students of color?
2. How do scholars discuss and theorize about recruitment and retention of gifted students of color who come from families living in poverty?
3. In what ways do scholars discuss the intersection of race and poverty for gifted students of color?

Significance to the Special Issue

This special issue calls for articles that examine the intersection of high academic potential and the impact poverty can have on students bringing their potential to fruition. Exploring how scholars have discussed the intersection of giftedness, race, and poverty will provide insight into the field's understanding of how students with the highest academic potential succeed while coping with and/or overcoming the impact of poverty. More important, we seek to push the conversation in the field to ensure that educators discuss gifted students living in poverty, especially students of color, from an asset-based perspective. Given that our research informs pedagogical practices of gifted education professionals, it is important to examine how we discuss poverty, how we write about coming from poverty, and how this influences current trends in the recruitment and retention of gifted students of color who live in poverty.

Methodology

This study is centered on the content analysis of articles in five gifted education journals (*Gifted Child Quarterly*, *Roeper Review*, *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *Journal of Advanced Academics* [titled *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education* prior to 2006], and *Gifted Child Today*). While this journal list is not comprehensive of all the outlets that publish articles on topics and students in gifted education, these particular journals were selected given that their specific aims and scope are exclusively focused on gifted education. Moreover, these journals have been used in

previous syntheses of the field; thus, we deemed them appropriate for selection in this study.

Article Selection Process

To secure potential articles, we went to the physical or online version of each of the selected journals, searching each volume published from 2000 to 2015. The following article selection criteria were used:

1. The article must be empirical/data based (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research design).
2. The article must discuss students of color who are gifted *and* live in poverty.

During the initial search, we copied the titles and abstracts of potential articles that fit our search criteria ($N = 44$). Through our initial analysis, we noticed that poverty was not always used in the title of the article or abstract; thus, we modified our search to include other keywords such as “low-socioeconomic status,” “economically disadvantaged,” and “rural.” In addition, it is worth noting that the race of participants was not always stated in the title and/or abstract. As a result, we included keywords such as “culturally and linguistically diverse.” We then reviewed each abstract to determine if the study met our search criteria. Articles that did not fulfill both search criteria were eliminated from our analysis which led to 22 articles being included in this study. Eleven articles were published in *Gifted Child Quarterly*, six articles in *Journal of the Education of the Gifted*, three articles in *Roeper Review*, and one article in both *Journal of Advanced Academics* (titled *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education* prior to 2006) and *Gifted Child Today*.

Data Analysis

The content of the articles was analyzed via a two-phase approach. Phase 1 consisted of quantitatively exploring the characteristics of the articles that met search criteria. Thus, to address the first question about the characteristics of articles published in gifted education journals on the intersection of poverty and race, we developed a survey via SurveyMonkey, which allowed us to create survey questions for each aspect of the article being examined. We then searched each journal article to determine the theoretical/conceptual framework, methodology, race of participants, grade level(s), and setting where the study took place (urban, suburban, rural) and recorded it in our survey. Table 1 presents a more detailed account of the information mentioned above, along with each article's purpose as derived from the abstract.

Phase 2 used a qualitative approach to explore how scholars theorized about students of color who were gifted and living in poverty. More specifically, we used Harper's (2012) content analysis approach through conducting a qualitative

Table 1. Comprehensive Table of Studies Analyzed.

Author(s) and year of publication	Purpose	Methodology and theoretical/ conceptual framework (TCF)	Race of participants included in study	Grade level and setting of article
Bland, Coxon, Changler, and VanTassel-Baska (2010)	This study investigates how Project Clarion engages urban gifted students in science.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander Multiracial Native American White Other (race unknown to authors) 	Elementary school, urban setting
Borland, Schnur, and Wright (2000)	This study explores the experiences of five economically disadvantaged gifted minority students who were placed in a school for gifted students.	Mixed-methods, Ogbu's cultural ecological theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Hispanic Multiracial 	Elementary school, urban setting
Carman and Taylor (2010)	This study explored the relationship between ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and Naglieri Noverbal Ability Test (NNAT) for identifying gifted students.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Hispanic Native American Asian 	Elementary school, suburban
Cotabish and Robinson (2012)	This study explored the impact of peer coaching on gifted administrators knowledge and ability to increase access to programs for culturally diverse and low-income gifted learners.	Quantitative, peer coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American White 	Elementary, middle, and high school, urban and rural settings
T. L. Cross and Burney (2005)	This study explores the experiences of school counselors who are being trained to work with high-ability rural students.	Qualitative, Ruby Payne theory of poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race of participants unknown 	Middle school, rural setting
Daugherty and White (2008)	The purpose of this study was to explore Vygotsky's notion of private speech as a cognitive self-regulatory process and how it related to creativity measures among at-risk children.	Quantitative, Vygotsky's notion of private speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American White 	Preschool, urban setting
Grantham (2003)	This study shares findings from an advocacy event in Pulaski County, Arkansas which was aimed to desegregate their gifted programs and include more Black students specifically.	Qualitative, Gifted Program Advocacy Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American 	Elementary, middle, and high school, urban setting
Hallett and Venegas (2011)	Explores the connection between increased access and academic quality of AP (Advanced Placement) courses in low-income schools and how this influenced students' performance on AP exams and their experiences.	Mixed-methods, funds of knowledge framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Hispanic 	Postsecondary, urban setting

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Author(s) and year of publication	Purpose	Methodology and theoretical/conceptual framework (TCF)	Race of participants included in study	Grade level and setting of article
Harmon (2002)	This study explores the experiences of gifted African American inner-city students.	Qualitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American 	Elementary school, urban setting
Hébert and Beardsley (2001)	This study explores the experiences of a gifted Black child living in rural poverty.	Qualitative, critical theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American 	Elementary school, rural setting
Howley, Pendarvis, and Gholson (2005)	Examined the mathematics experiences of talented children in an impoverished rural school district.	Qualitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American White Other (race unknown to authors) 	Elementary and middle school, rural setting
Kitano and Lewis (2007)	Examined the relationship of tutoring in specific reading comprehension strategies to gains in reading achievement for children enrolled in self-contained classrooms for gifted students from low-income, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Latino Asian/Pacific Islander Multiracial White 	Elementary school, urban setting
Moon and Callahan (2001)	An investigation of the efficacy of mentoring, parental involvement, and multicultural curricula on the academic achievement of primary grade students from low-socioeconomic environments.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Latino Asian/Pacific Islander Multiracial White 	Elementary school, urban setting
Morales (2010)	This study explores the protective factors that foster resilience in urban gifted students.	Qualitative, resilience theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Hispanic 	Postsecondary, urban, suburban, and rural settings
Peters and Gentry (2010)	This study explores the use of the HOPE scale in identifying gifted elementary students.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Latino Asian/Pacific Islander Multiracial White 	Elementary school, urban, suburban, and rural settings
Reis, Colbert, and Hébert (2005)	This study compares the protective factors that foster resilience between gifted students who achieved academically and those who were underachievers.	Qualitative, resilience theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race of participants unknown, but labeled as ethnically diverse 	High school, urban setting

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Author(s) and year of publication	Purpose	Methodology and theoretical/ conceptual framework (TCF)	Race of participants included in study	Grade level and setting of article
Robinson, Lanzi, Weinberg, Ramey, and Ramey (2002)	Explored family factors associated with the academic success of gifted head start students.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American • Latino • Asian/Pacific Islander • Native American/Alaskan Native • White • Other (race not specified) • African American • White 	Preschool, urban setting
Swanson (2006)	This study explores Project Breakthrough program with teachers in South Carolina to train them to identify and support high-ability low-income minority students.	Mixed-methods, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American • White 	Elementary school, urban and rural settings
Tomlinson and Jarvis (2014)	Investigating how teachers and schools contributed to the academic success of minority students of high potential from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.	Qualitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American • Hispanic 	Elementary, middle, and high school, urban setting
VanTassel-Baska, Feng, and de Bruux (2007)	Comparison of trends for performance task-identified gifted students, traditionally identified gifted students, and nonidentified gifted students.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American • Hispanic • Native American • Asian Pacific/Islander • Multiracial • White 	Elementary school, urban and rural settings
VanTassel-Baska, Feng, and Evans (2007)	This study tracks the profile data of identification for gifted students in South Carolina, where a new performance-based dimension of identification has been employed, during a 3-year period and targeted to identify low-income and minority students.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American • Hispanic • Native American • Asian Pacific/Islander • Multiracial • White • Other (race unknown to authors) 	Elementary and middle school, urban and rural settings
VanTassel-Baska, Johnson, and Avery (2002)	This study explores the impact of a performance-based assessment on the identification of economically disadvantaged and minority students into gifted programs.	Quantitative, TCF not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American • Other (non-African American students labeled low-income were acknowledged, but their race was not disclosed) 	Elementary and middle school, urban and rural settings

Table 2. List of Codes, Code Definitions, and Respective Qualitative Theme.

Codes	Code definitions	Qualitative theme
• Ways to diversify gifted programs	Recommendations/suggestions on how to diversify gifted and talented programs	Success factors and identification strategies for gifted students of color living in poverty
• Success factors/barriers	Discussion of the success factors and barriers for student success in gifted and talented programs	
• Importance of culture	How culture influences recruitment and retention	
• Suggestions to circumvent impact of poverty	Discussion of how students of color living in poverty can overcome living in poverty	
• Poverty impact	Discussion of how poverty affects the identification of gifted students of color	Limited discussion of race and poverty and challenging deficit thinking
• Deficit thinking	Discussion about students that is framed from a deficit perspective	
• Challenging deficit thinking	Discussion that challenges deficit perspectives about gifted students of color	
• Impact of racism	Discussion about the impact of racism on the student experience	
• Focus on individuals and not the system	Discussions based on critiquing the individual (e.g., students lacking resilience) rather than the system (e.g., how schools create environments that are not conducive to the needs of students of color)	

analysis of the discussion and implications section from each article. The first step in this process consisted of copying both the discussion and implication sections from the articles and pasting this into individual Word documents. This process yielded 82 singled-spaced pages of text. We then uploaded each document into NVivo (a qualitative data management software), which allowed us to analyze the texts and develop themes. Initially, we conducted several line-by-line readings of each text to develop an overall understanding of the text. Given the research questions, our initial qualitative coding process consisted of reading through each individual text and highlighting sentences and phrases that were related to the following three categories: (a) explanations of recruitment and retention strategies for gifted students of color; (b) discussions of poverty; and (c) discussions of race. After the first author engaged in the initial coding, it was discovered that the words race/racism were only mentioned and theorized in two articles; thus, we decided to group the discussion of poverty and race into one categorical code. Finally, we utilized an inductive constant comparative approach to analyze the data, which generated four subcodes related to the recruitment and retention strategies for gifted students of color and five subcodes related to the discussion of poverty and race. Table 2 provides a list of the generated codes, our definitions of the codes, and their respective theme.

Findings

Characteristics of Articles Published on Giftedness, Race, and Poverty

When examining the methodology breakdown of the 22 studies, 50% ($n = 11$) were quantitative, 36.36% ($n = 8$) were

qualitative, and 13.63% ($n = 3$) used a mixed-methods design. Only 40.90% of articles presented a theoretical framework as guiding the study. Moreover, only one article (T. L. Cross & Burney, 2005) used a theoretical or conceptual perspective that was centered on poverty (i.e., Ruby Payne) and four articles (Borland et al., 2000; Hébert & Beardsley, 2001; Morales, 2010; Reis et al., 2005) used a framework that centered on the experiences of students of color and/or challenged dominant ideology about race, giftedness, and poverty, such as critical race theory and cultural ecology theory (see Table 2 for detail on the theoretical frameworks used).

When analyzing the race of participants in the studies, 90.90% of articles ($n = 20$) had African American students as a part of the dataset. Hispanic students were part of the sample in 54.45% of studies ($n = 12$), while Asian/Pacific Islander, multiracial, and Native American participants were represented in 36.36% ($n = 8$), 31.81% ($n = 7$), and 22.72% ($n = 5$) of studies, respectively. Despite articles having a focus on the needs of students of color, in 50% of the studies ($n = 11$), White students were also included as a part of the participant sample. The inclusion of White students occurred in quantitative studies where all racial groups were compared. However, in qualitative studies, researchers explored an analysis of non-White racial groups independently.

In the articles we focused on, interesting trends emerged in the analysis of the grade level of students. We found that elementary school students (Grades K-5; $n = 16$) were the most used sample population followed by middle school grades (6-8; $n = 7$), high school grades (9-12; $n = 4$), preschool ($n = 2$), and postsecondary institutions ($n = 2$).

Last, we analyzed the articles to determine the setting where the studies occurred. Eleven studies (50%) had a focus

exclusively in urban settings, three focused on rural areas exclusively (13.63%), and one focused on a suburban setting. Seven studies (31.81%) compared students in some combination of urban, rural, and suburban setting settings (see Table 1 for greater detail).

Success Factors and Identification Strategies for Gifted Students of Color Living in Poverty

Many articles (14 of the 22 studies) discussed the factors of success for students of color in gifted education who live in poverty in their discussion and implication sections. One particular success factor frequently discussed ($n = 10$) was that students of color had access to caring and supportive family members and other adults who pushed the children to strive for excellence. For instance, two studies provided the following insights:

The findings in this [study] highlight the importance of strong emotional support and understanding from adults who understand and value creativity in young children. (Hébert & Beardsley, 2001, p. 97)

[Parents'] child-rearing practices, their support of children's school achievement, and their management of their own family resources appear in large part to relate to the children's high achievement. (Robinson et al., 2002, p. 288)

Along with caring families, several studies found that for gifted students to be successful, teachers had a strong influence (Harmon, 2002; Robinson et al., 2002; Swanson, 2006). In particular, findings indicated that teachers recognized and found ways to integrate students' home culture into school (Borland et al., 2000; Tomlinson & Jarvis, 2014). As a result, there was also some discussion regarding the need for teachers to become more culturally competent. For example, Harmon (2002) posited, "When dealing with African American students, teachers must participate in the process of becoming culturally competent, a process including significant contact with diverse groups of students and that can best occur in teacher education programs" (p. 75).

Along with the discussion of success factors, researchers advocated for various identification strategies for gifted students of color who live in poverty ($n = 11$). Many of the studies acknowledged that current identification procedures are not adequate in identifying gifted students of color who come from low-socioeconomic households (Grantham, 2003). For instance, Borland et al. (2000) stated, "we need to adopt non-traditional, rigorously validated identification methods that are more sensitive to expressions of potential giftedness in environments outside the mainstream, in which this field has usually operated" (p. 30). Among the studies reviewed, several different nontraditional strategies were discussed, including the use of nonverbal assessments (Carman & Taylor, 2010; VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & de Brux, 2007;

VanTassel-Baska, Feng, & Evans, 2007), lowering of standardized test score thresholds (VanTassel-Baska et al., 2002) and use of assessments that incorporate more of students of color lived realities (Howley et al., 2005).

Limited Discussion of Race and Poverty and Challenging Deficit Thinking

In the discussion and implication sections of articles reviewed, authors often focused on giftedness and ways to better identify gifted students, but did not necessarily provide an in-depth discussion about the ways poverty and race affected the recruitment, retention, and experiences of gifted students of color. Often words such as "alternative" or "non-traditional" were used to describe potential methods to ensure students of color who live in poverty are identified and served as gifted. In a few cases ($n = 4$), scholars argued about the importance of focusing on both access and retention of students. Hallett and Venegas (2011), for example, explained that "Increasing access alone will not resolve the inequities experienced by students in many urban educational environments" (p. 485). While text from the studies stated that inequities existed, such as the aforementioned example, there tended to be minimal discussion and description of specific inequities. As a result, few studies provided discussion about the intersection of race and poverty. Borland et al. (2000) asserted,

Poverty and racism, although they diminish us all as a society, do singular damage to the most vulnerable, especially children, who are their direct victims. To believe otherwise is to ignore the evidence of our most appalling failure. (p. 28)

In addition to the limited discussion about poverty, race, and giftedness, we found several studies ($n = 9$) used a deficit thinking approach to describe gifted students of color living in poverty. This is defined as thinking that "holds that poor schooling performance is rooted in students' alleged cognitive and motivational deficits, while institutional structures and inequitable schooling arrangements that exclude students from learning are held exculpatory" (Valencia, 1997, p. 9). For example, some studies presented conclusions which indicated that students should learn to better adapt to the schooling environment rather than suggesting how the schooling environment could be more responsive to the cultural needs of the students. Reis et al. (2005) stated the following about the factors that affect the development of resilience for underachieving gifted students:

A careful analysis of the data suggests that the risk factors that may have thwarted the development of resilience were the absence of positive peer support (peers who achieved in school); siblings who dropped out of school or were involved in substance abuse; absence of positive parental role models or at least one supportive adult; and lack of involvement in an elementary or middle school gifted program. (p. 117)

While the aforementioned study provided suggestions about potential risk factors, these recommendations point more to factors related to students' home lives, which perpetuates a deficit narrative about the families and communities students of color who live in poverty come from rather than acknowledging that schools are often spaces where students of color are subjected to racism and racial microaggressions (Ford, Trotman Scott, Moore, & Amos, 2013; Stambaugh & Ford, 2015) that could affect the ways in which they developed resilience and succeeded in school.

Along with not acknowledging the school's role in fostering gifted students of color who come from economically disadvantaged communities, some researchers used deficit-oriented language in their recommendations for teachers and school counselors on how to support such students. For instance, T. L. Cross and Burney (2005) provided the following recommendation for school counselors to work with rural gifted students of color: "Be especially encouraging to high-ability girls. Encourage them to think outside the box. At a minimum, help them consider advanced education in fields that are compatible with family responsibilities. Enlist the support of the mother" (p. 155). These types of comments are troubling as the authors imposed deficit-oriented assumptions about gifted students of color. For instance, while mothers do have a strong role in their child's education, only stating that the support of the mother should be enlisted could suggest that students of color who live in poverty come from mother-led homes, which is not always the case, or that fathers are not involved in their children's lives. To contextualize this example, the authors also did not provide any suggestions for supporting high ability boys in their recommendations and advice for how school counselors can work with fathers. Moreover, the authors did not account for the complexity and richness of the lives of students who live in poverty. This is critical as Howell (2013) argued that because many people truly know so little about rural students they report to stereotypical depictions of rural students that equates them with "poverty, ignorance, shrinking industry, and religious fundamentalism" (p. 5).

Although some of the discourse was centered on deficit language, other scholars took the opportunity to theorize about the importance of challenging deficit thinking (Morales, 2010; Tomlinson & Jarvis, 2014). These authors articulated the need for teachers, school counselors, school administrators, and other school personnel to foster environments of success. For instance, Tomlinson and Jarvis (2014) reported the importance of having

teachers and schools who operate from a strengths perspective rather than a deficit view of cultural difference and poverty, who help students navigate the world of academic achievement without sacrificing their cultural identities, who provide both the support and challenge required for students to succeed at high levels, and who are flexible in response to individuals and groups of students rather than expecting students to fit rigid programs or profiles. (p. 216)

These authors provided recommendations that acknowledge that schools should be spaces where students of color have the opportunity to flourish without giving up any part of their identity, and it is the role of the school to provide the resources for gifted students of color to achieve academically.

Limitations of the Study

There are two limitations that must be acknowledged. First, this article only explored empirical studies. We did not include relevant books, literature reviews, theoretical papers, and reports on this topic (e.g., J. R. Cross & Dockery, 2014; Ford, 2003, 2013; Kitano & Lewis, 2005; Robinson, 2003; Stambaugh & Wood, 2015; VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2007). Second, because our analysis focused on journals with an exclusive focus on gifted education, other relevant studies published in general education, special education, and more interdisciplinary outlets were not included.

Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine the characteristics of gifted journal articles that explored the intersection of race and poverty. Moreover, this study explored scholars' commentary on strategies to recruit and retain gifted students of color and investigated how scholars theorize about gifted students of color in their empirical work. We found that while a majority of studies focused on P-12 settings, there was a paucity of studies focused on postsecondary settings for gifted students of color who come from low-income communities. Thus, although we have some understanding of how these students navigate their P-12 schooling experiences, we know little about what happens to these students when they attend college (Rinn & Plucker, 2004). This is a critical void given that finances often serve as a barrier to college completion for low-income students (Engle & Tinto, 2008), particularly when they are Black (The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 2017). More research is needed to gain knowledge on how gifted students of color from low-income families secure funding for college.

Our findings confirm research that explains the paucity of knowledge about Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, and multiracial gifted students, as most of the studies focus on Black and Hispanic students (Davis & Moore, 2016; Ford, Whiting, & Goings, 2016). Furthermore, approximately half of studies (all quantitative) in this review used White students who are low-income as a comparison group in their analyses. Some studies also used the entire sample of students from poverty that included students of color, to compare with groups of gifted students not living in poverty. Thus, poverty was the variable of greatest interest in some of these studies, not students of color. Given that these studies focused on some aspect of the recruitment and identification process for gifted students, we understand the need to compare all students in schools. However, based on the findings

in these studies and other research, students of color are still vastly underidentified as gifted (Ford, 2012, 2013). Hence, it is important for researchers to develop studies that delve deeper into the experiences of gifted students of color who come from low-income families. From these nuanced investigations, we can begin to better understand how these students navigate gifted programs and how schools can develop systemic, systematic, and targeted initiatives to recruit and retain these students.

In Rank, Yoon, and Hirschl's (2003) critique of research on poverty, they argued that scholars place more emphasis on "who loses out at the economic game, rather than addressing the fact that the game produces losers in the first place" (p. 3). In other words, scholars have focused on how individuals are affected by poverty rather than focusing on the structures (e.g., education system, government) that have created these inequities in the first place. Similar to Rank et al.'s (2003) argument, through our analysis, we found that while all of the studies selected had a focus on gifted students of color who live in poverty, there was a lack of discourse in the findings or implication sections about the impact that poverty and race had on students of color's identification and their experiences in gifted programs. In essence, we found that poverty and race were treated as a variable to control for in studies rather than discussed as central issues that affect which students are identified and placed in gifted and talented programs. Moreover, in many ways, the studies analyzed followed the advice of Robinson (2003) who recommended that to disrupt inequities in gifted education, schools should consider increasing their socioeconomic diversity as the primary goal, and race/ethnicity as their secondary goal. Despite the influence socioeconomic status has on the trajectory of students of color, without acknowledging "racism as real" (Harper, 2012, p. 25) in gifted program recruitment and identification—and developing ways to address this issue—we will continue to see the same inequities and underrepresentation of gifted students of color. Thus, from our perspective, gifted education stakeholders (e.g., teachers, counselors, administrators, researchers) must be willing to critically examine how racism affects gifted education and then work to dismantle such injustices in the field through developing culturally responsive curricula while also training and supporting gifted education teachers to develop a sociopolitical consciousness, which is often a missing but vital component of culturally responsive pedagogy (Royal & Gibson, 2017). This will require not only practitioners in the field to change but also the professors who prepare future practitioners (Fasching-Varner & Dodo-Seriki, 2012). Without truly engaging in this revolution, students of color and low-income students will continue to suffer the consequences.

Findings from this study provided some evidence that deficit thinking and pathologizing were prevalent in the descriptions of gifted students of color (e.g., T. L. Cross & Burney, 2005). While deficit thinking was utilized in several studies, scholars also took the opportunity to directly

challenge these narratives (e.g., Morales, 2010; Tomlinson & Jarvis, 2014). Given that research influences practice, there must be a concerted effort to debunk deficit perspectives because they can influence educators' perceptions of students of color. For example, Grissom and Redding (2016) found that even when Black students performed like White students, teachers underreferred them for gifted programs. Although numerous scholars have written extensively about the underrepresentation of students of color in gifted programs (e.g., Baldwin, 1987; Ford et al., 2008; Frasier, 1989; Henfield, Woo, & Bang, 2017), there is a need for more studies that use a critical lens to examine teacher and school leaders' beliefs and attitudes about students of color who live in poverty (Ford, 2003, 2013). Given the power teachers have in recommending who gets placed in gifted programs (e.g., Grissom & Redding, 2016), as researchers we must not only continue to write about these issues, but work with teachers and school personnel to train them on how to identify giftedness among (a) students who live in poverty, (b) students of color, and (c) students of color who live in poverty.

In 2007, the National Leadership Conference on Low-Income Promising learners provided the space for an important conversation about how to ensure our students who come from economically disadvantaged communities are still recognized for their ability to succeed academically. Moreover, in the edited conference proceedings volume titled *Overlooked Gems: A National Perspective on Low-Income Promising Learners* (VanTassel-Baska & Stambaugh, 2007), scholars from around the country provided a holistic perspective on why we continue to see inequities of representation in gifted programs for students from low-income families. In the conference proceedings, Kitano (2007) explained that children living in poverty are

A highly diverse group with respect to the severity, timing, and duration of poverty; race, ethnicity, and primary language; country of origin; geographic region, mobility; family structure (e.g., single or teen parent, foster care); parental employment status; and level of education. (p. 31)

Given the heterogeneity of students living in poverty, we contend that research must also examine the intersection of giftedness, poverty, and race in diverse settings. In particular, while our analysis found that a majority of studies focused on students in urban and rural settings, we know very little about the experiences of students in suburban settings who live in poverty. While students of color are more populated in urban settings, there are many in suburban settings and as a result, it will be paramount that educators in all settings have the tools and dispositions to identify and work with gifted students of color.

Conclusions and Final Thoughts

In many ways, our experiences reflect the students' realities in the studies analyzed for this piece. The first author,

an African American male, grew up in a low-income home. Although identified as gifted in elementary school, due to a lack of knowledge about the opportunities afforded in gifted programs, he never formally participated in his school district's gifted and talented program. Despite negative perceptions about his academic ability from teachers, his family always pushed him to succeed academically. The second author, an African American female, has devoted more than 20 years to writing about gifted education inequities relative to race and income. She was formally identified as gifted in elementary school and experienced many challenges in the late 1970s that many gifted Black students experience today. She has been unapologetic about challenging the field of gifted education to be equity minded.

We present our experiences here to underscore our relationship to this topic and how it potentially influenced our content analysis and interpretation of findings. We sought to explore the discourse about the intersection of poverty, race, and giftedness; therefore, we wanted our analysis to focus on what has been written versus who wrote it. Given that some of this work includes that of colleagues, we seek to open up an honest conversation about how students at the intersection of poverty, race, and giftedness have been discussed to ensure that these assets are incorporated into research and practice.

Using the game of baseball as an analogy for life, T. L. Cross (2013) explained that for students living in poverty, their path around the bases to home plate is filled with barriers, including the lack of many resources (e.g., bat) that other students who come from more affluent households have. T. L. Cross further explains that "Where we have failed is actually moving past our allegiance to financial blindness that guarantees their staying in their place—in the dugout with no bat" (pp. 264-265). While the studies reviewed provide a foundational understanding of the intersection of poverty, race, and giftedness, we urge scholars to address, critique, and provide viable solutions for the systemic inequities that affect the recruitment and retention of gifted students of color who live in poverty. In essence, we want to see students of color who live in poverty equipped with resources (e.g., sociopolitically conscious teachers, culturally responsive curriculum, less biased testing instruments) so that their gifts can be recognized and cultivated. As knowledge generators and professionals, it is our duty to continue to lead this charge.

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