

PERCEPTIONS OF TALENT IDENTIFICATION AND TALENT
DEVELOPMENT IN MUSICALLY GIFTED CHILDREN:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY

A THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

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DECEMBER 2002

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DENTON, TEXAS

October 15, 2002

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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Kerri Harris-Keller entitled "Perceptions of Talent Identification and Talent Development in Musically Gifted Children: A Qualitative Study." I have examined this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Child Development.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest appreciation goes to Dr. Petty for her kindness, support, and guidance throughout this research study. I also appreciate Dr. Jennings and Dr. Fannin for their help and support as committee members. I greatly value their opinion.

I want to thank all of my children, family, and friends for their encouragement. Without their support I do not believe I could have completed this enormous undertaking. I always had a shoulder to lean on when this project seemed overwhelming.

My mom was invaluable and always willing to help. I love her dearly for her continued support and guidance throughout my entire educational career.

Lastly, my deepest appreciation goes to my husband for his unending patience and support of my efforts to complete this research study.

ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF TALENT IDENTIFICATION AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT IN MUSICALLY GIFTED CHILDREN: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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December 2002

A qualitative study was used to explore perceptions of talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children. The first section involved teacher participants who used a Talent Identification Instrument, an instrument created for this study, to identify musically gifted children. The second section of this study involved parent participants who have identified musically gifted children.

The sampling technique used was voluntary. Five private lesson music teachers and 14 parents of identified musically gifted children participated in the study. Instruments used in the study were 12 open-ended interview questions, which related to the research questions, a parental demographic questionnaire, and a Talent Identification Instrument. The Talent Identification Instrument was adapted from research by Haroutounian and

Gardner (Haroutounian, 1995, 2000a, 2000b & Gardner, 1985). It was created by the researcher to set guidelines for teachers so this study would have consistency among the numerous teachers involved in identifying musically gifted students.

The findings consisted of six themes and five sub-themes, which emerged from the interviews. The six themes were: efforts and development, family activities, teacher requirements and standards, musically gifted child's progress, sacrifices, and parental involvement. The following sub-themes emerged: parental impression of the first music teacher, motivation in relation to age, self-motivation in the child, teacher recommendations, and positive reflections on hard work. Results highlighted the parent's perceptions of talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children. Implications were drawn for parents, specialists, and educators working in this field.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the past decade, educators who promote the field of gifted and talented education, have shown a particular interest in "musical intelligence" (Gardner, 1985; Haroutounian, 2000a). The heightened interest may be a reflection of current neurological research suggesting that music training has dramatically enhanced spatial-temporal reasoning in young children (Dennis, Levine, Newcomb, Rauscher, Shaw, and Wright, 1997; Petsche, Rappelsberger, Rauscher, Sarnthein, Shaw, VonStein, 1997). Due to this research, parents and educators have become more aware of the importance of music in children's lives. Various instrumental pedagogical methods have been created to begin music training for a child as young as 3. Teacher training programs have become available to enthusiastic music educators that are eager to teach young children (Kendall, 1996). An emphasis on parental support has emerged throughout the fine arts because researchers have studied the impact of family-child interactions and its

profound effects on the musical development of the child (Christian & Snowden, 1999).

Musical talent has often been neglected in gifted identification processes. Previous gifted assessments focused mainly on intelligence scores and achievement testing (Haroutounian, 1995). However, with the 1994 publication of the National Standards for Arts Education, the need for identifying and training musically gifted children has increased. This publication may be used as a point of reference for the assessment of gifted and talented children because it has included specific recommendations for the identification and service of the needs of these students. This publication attempts to provide social researchers with a conceptual framework for creating a mutual understanding of the fundamentals of artistic talent within the child. It is important for specialists, educators, and parents to explore the meaning of musical intelligence for the benefit of children (Haroutounian, 2000a).

Statement of the Problem

Humans have been making music for centuries and throughout this time many musical prodigies have existed. A

person cannot turn on the TV, flip through a magazine, or listen to the radio without observing the talent of a new gifted musician. There appears to be a surge of talent among children and youths.

Over the past decade, child development specialists, parents, and educators have begun asking questions concerning musically gifted children. Many want to know what role educators, parents, and family members serve in the development of a musically gifted child's life. In order to nurture the gifted child's ability, questions need to be addressed in preparing child development specialists, educators, and parents best promote the gifted child's ability.

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children. The recent identification of musical intelligence in the educational community has caused an increase in public awareness. In order to meet the demand for this community, more specific identification criteria must be established. Extended development into programs that

facilitate talent and training for individuals who interact with these gifted children needs to be established.

Musically gifted children have unique characteristics that require the attention of many music education specialists. In general, the overall goal is to develop the child's gifts to the fullest.

Research Questions

In order to fulfill the purpose of this qualitative study, the following research questions were explored:

1. What role do parents play in the musically gifted child's talent development?
2. What characteristics do parents find necessary in the musically gifted child's private lesson music teacher?
3. How is the immediate family of a musically gifted child affected by their talent development?

Theoretical Perspective

In order to understand the importance of talent development in musically gifted children, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory were explored. Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences describes intelligences in terms of distinct

sets of processing operations that permit individuals to solve problems, create products, and discover new knowledge in a diverse array of culturally valued activities (Berk, 2000). Brofenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory views a child as developing within a complex system of relationships affected by multiple levels of the surrounding environment. The theory stipulates that biological dispositions join with the environmental forces to mold development (Berk, 2000).

Within Gardner's theory, seven independent intelligences are defined and he argues that each intelligence has a unique biological potential and a distinct course of development given the proper process of education required to transform any raw intellectual potential into a mature social role. Gardner emphasizes that cultural values and learning opportunities have a great deal to do with the extent to which a child's strengths are realized and the ways they are expressed (Berk, 2000). According to Gardner, musical intelligence often emerges early in childhood and is beneficial in the identification and development process (Gardner, 1983).

Within Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, a differentiated account of multiple levels affect the development of a child within a complex set of systems. This theory recognizes the levels as the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. Within each of these levels is the behavioral setting in which the child has three significant components labeled as a system or activities, roles, and interpersonal relations (Thomas, 2000).

When looking at talent identification and talent development, several key components of Gardner's and Bronfenbrenner's theories correlate with each other. The microsystem in Bronfenbrenner's theory refers to activities and interaction patterns in the child's immediate surroundings such as parents and extended family members. The mesosystem refers to the connections between the microsystems such as teachers, and educational facilities (Berk, 2000). In both the microsystem and mesosystem Gardner's theory applies because the parent, family members, teachers, and educational facilities should give an educational process that he argues is required to give

the musically gifted child's raw musical intelligence a chance to develop.

The exosystem refers to the social settings that do not contain children such as the community or formal organizations and the macrosystem is the outermost level of Brofenbrenner's theory. This system refers to values, customs, and resources of a particular culture (Berk, 2000). Gardner's theory connects within the systems because the musically gifted child is greatly influenced by the cultural values of their family and community in which they live. Once the intelligence has been identified, the learning opportunities provided by all the systems are important in the talent development processes.

Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Brofenbrenner's Ecological System's Theory display differentiated accounts of how a musically gifted child is affected by their families, educators, community, and cultural diversities. Each theory helps to understand the talent identification and talent development processes needed by musically gifted children.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this paper the following terms are defined and clarified:

A child is a person between the ages of 3 and 18.

A young child is a person between ages 3 to 5.

Giftedness is found in a person who shows exceptional abilities in a given domain.

Musical intelligence is a distinct intelligence that is shown in individuals by producing and appreciating pitch, rhythm, aesthetic-sounding tones, and musical expressiveness.

Talent is a highly recognizable development of natural ability within a person.

Spatial-temporal reasoning is maintaining and transforming mental images in the absence of a physical model.

Educational process is the child's experiences in an academically educational facility or a music training facility.

Metaperception is the cognitive/perceptual functioning of a musician while making interpretive decisions.

Perceptual awareness is the capacities within music aptitude that is manifested in listening. Perceptual awareness is recognized when a child listens carefully and is aware of the sound.

Perceptual awareness of sound is observed in children who are very aware of sounds in both music and the environment. This child will listen with a focused concentration and remember it.

Rhythmic sense is observed in children who instinctively respond to rhythm. This child can maintain a steady pulse when performing and repeat creatively extended rhythmic ideas. The child "feels" the rhythmic pulse and responds in a fluid manner.

Sense of pitch is observed in children who hear pitches move up and down in melodies. This child can remember the melodic shape and repeat the melody while creatively adding extensions to it.

A crystallizing experience occurs when a person suddenly has moment of insight that sets them on a particular life course in regards to their exceptional talent. Gardner refers to crystallizing experience as a

moment when a person has discovered their calling and has decided to make it a long-term commitment.

Assumptions

The following assumptions are appropriate for this study:

1. Parents of musically gifted children are aware of and able to convey their roles and other family members roles in the musically gifted child's talent development.
2. Parents of musically gifted children are aware and acknowledge that they have a musically gifted child.
3. Parents of musically gifted children are able to determine if a music teacher is a good educator for their musically gifted child.

Delimitations

Two factors limit the study. First, all of the teacher participants were private lesson music teachers from one particular North Texas public school, which has an unusually large orchestra program. Second, the musically gifted children studied either the violin or cello and no other instruments were discussed.

Summary

This chapter focused on a particular interest in musically gifted children over the past decade. First, the statement of the problem addressed two questions: (a) What criterion reference tests or observational methods do parents and educators in the identification of children use? and (b) What role do educators, parents, and family members serve in the development of a musically gifted child's life? The purpose of this study is to examine talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review examines the many influential factors relating to the development of talent in musically gifted children and their home environment, parental influences, and teacher influences. Questions regarding talent identification and talent development have been raised throughout the literature. This review of literature examines effective procedures to identify children who show potential in musical talent by discussing tests for talent identification, observational assessments, and criteria for the identifying potential musical talent in children.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Talent Identification

There is a growing need for the development of effective procedures to identify children who show potential in musical talent. These procedures should reflect the assessment and recognition of potential musical talent. Haroutounian's (2000a) study used descriptive results to reveal a general agreement among educators and

specialists concerning talent identification procedures. Specific terminology was developed to describe musical attributes and was presented in a multi-faceted approach. This multi-faceted approach included testing, observational assessment, and criteria for the identifying potential musical talent in children.

Testing

Throughout the review of literature, there is a consensus that testing for the identification of musical talent is problematic. Due to the lack of agreement on definitions and ratings of talent, some specialists believe standardized testing is unreliable. Therefore music aptitude scores should not be the complete determination of musical talent (Baum, Oreck, Owen, 1996). Some researchers suggest avoiding tests of intelligence, achievement, and general creativity as a preliminary screening for musical talent (Baum et al., 1996 & Haroutounian, 2000a). Overall, standardized testing results should be considered as only part of the equation when identifying musically talented children.

Observation Assessment

Observations of children should be made while they are in the music making process. It further recommends a team of several observers who are trained in techniques for identifying potential music talent in children. The setting should be comfortable for the child, to encourage a musical performance correlated to the child's ability (Baum et al., 1996 & Haroutouian, 2000a).

A study by Baum et al. (1996) relied heavily on multi-session observations of auditions to see a broad array of artistic talent. According to this study, a single observation lacks reliability and inhibits the person observing to see motivation, commitment, and creativity within the child. This group of researchers created the Talent Identification Instrument as an observational tool. This instrument is used over multi-sessions and is proven to be reliable and valid in discovering musical talent among children. Researchers agree that observations used in the identification of musically talented children should be done over a period of time to see developing work such as creative expression.

Perceptual Awareness and Discrimination

Perceptual awareness and discrimination is the ability to perceive and differentiate musical components by listening carefully (Haroutounian, 1995, 2000a). Perceptual awareness is recognized in children when parents or educators take notice of a child listening carefully and being aware of sound. There is a focused concentration on sound (Sims, 1995).

These capacities can also be found through activities focusing on listening, rhythmic movement, and tonal memory of melodies or songs. Music aptitude or intelligence has three basic sensory components: the perceptual awareness of sound, a rhythmic sense, and a sense of pitch (Haroutounian, 2000a, 2000b).

Perceptual awareness of sound is defined as listening for differences in pitch, rhythm, and melodies. Sims' (1995) study on children's ability to discriminate music concept in listening provided information concerning age-related responses and critical periods for music concept development. Tempo discrimination was considered easy for all age levels, while pitch discrimination is more

difficult. In Haroutounian's (2000a) study, musically talented children perceive these discriminations.

The use of pitch, rhythm, and tonal memory in children is found in several studies. Dennis et al. (1997) used pitch intervals and memory skills for keyboard training of preschool children when trying to determine the effects of music training and spatial temporal reasoning skills.

Gromko and Poorman (1998) used pitch and rhythmic aspects of songs to increase children's memories for musical sounds. This was done by repetition of songs, using their body as a percussion instrument, painting melodies in the air to establish the music's steady pulse, playing on songbells, and by following a tactile touch chart that outlined the contour of songs.

Creative Expression/Interpretation

The review of literature finds creative expression important in the identification of musically gifted children. The Talent Identification Instrument used within Baum et al. (1996) study, creativity was an important identification of talent. Two aspects were used as criteria in the Talent Identification Instrument. The first criterion discussed was expressiveness. This study defines

expressiveness with how a child responds with sensitivity, performs with energy and intensity, is fully involved, and communicates feelings. Composition and improvisation was the second criterion and defined by a child who improvises spontaneously, takes risks, makes surprising or unusual statements, creates sounds in original ways, and makes up songs. Haroutounian's (2000a) study refers to creativity as metaperception, which is the perceptual/cognitive process in which a child senses sound internally, remembers the sound, manipulates the sound, and demonstrates the manipulated sound to others. This process requires internal music decision-making; each interpretation is a personal expression in how they sense the sounds of music to be.

Educators and parents would recognize this talented child by observing their eagerness to express themselves through music and reworking ideas of previous musical work and work of others. A description from Haroutounin's (1995) dialogue states,

At its simplest level, metaperception is at work when a young child sings a nursery rhyme. The child enjoys playing the sound, listening to a singsong nature of the tune, and spontaneously repeating the song

different ways. At its most sophisticated, the professional musician practices a musical passage for several hours, experimenting with melodic shape, balance, tonal colors, and touches, until the technical precision and subtle nuances in the sound produce the expressive intent of the musician's interpretation. (p. 112)

Another important aspect to creative expression and interpretation is a musical performance. This is an aesthetic experience shared by both the audience and performer. Elements of perceptual discrimination and metaperception help to mold this performance. The child who shows a potential through musical performance demonstrates a natural ease of movement during a performance, an eagerness to express emotions through an interpretive response, evidence of listening and interpreting ideas while performing, a fluid sense of rhythm, and a personal involvement in the music (Haroutounian, 1995,2000a).

Motivation

In the review of literature there was an overwhelming agreement that motivating factors should be included in the

assessing of musically talented children (Haroutounian, 2000a). This type of motivation found in children is self-initiated and internal. A musically gifted child characteristically focuses well on musical tasks, shows persistence and perseverance, and sets high standards for themselves. This child can concentrate over an extended period of time in musical practice. A child who is self-motivated by music is clearly different from a student who is merely interested in music.

Talent Development

There is agreement throughout the literature that there are many influential factors relating to the development of talent. The important influential factors that research states regarding musically talented children include the home environment, parental influences, and teacher influences (Davidson, Moore, Sloboda, 1998; J. Freeman, 2000; Zdzinski, 1996).

Home Environment

Researchers agree that teaching and learning begins in the home. In a current study (Christian & Snowden, 1999),

quantitative and qualitative measures were taken to determine the support given by parents and families of gifted children. Overall, the study emphasized that the parents and family play the principal role in the education of gifted children. Musicians especially need the support and positive influences of the home environment. According to J. Freeman (2000), musically talented children were the most successful, when they lived in homes that were particularly generous in encouragement, material provisions made for practicing, and their lifestyle.

Cooper's (2001) study regarding adults' perceptions of piano lessons as children reported that positive experiences towards music lessons and practice was due to the considerable participation of music in the home. Parents and family play the principal role in the education and support of talented children.

Parental Influences

According to Zdzinski (1996), parents are their child's first teachers and can help their achievements by providing positive attitudes towards learning. The purpose of Zdzinski's study was to examine relationships of

parental involvement, music aptitude, music performance, and cognitive musical outcomes of instrumental music students. Parental involvement was found to be significantly related to affective, cognitive, and performance outcomes in music.

Christian & Snowden (1999) found that parents were aware of the importance of the early learning periods and felt capable and competent to teach their children. The parents were encouraging to their child's creativity and set expectations consistent with their child's developmental level. Parents recognized the value of play and understood its links to learning and creativity.

Bloom noted the importance of high parental involvement in talent (Haroutounian, 2000b; Melson, Moon, Windecker-Nelson, 1997). Duke's (1999) study regarding teacher and student behaviors in lessons found that teachers tended to give more verbal explanations to students with higher parental involvement than to students with low parental involvement. This study also found that students who had the support of their parents tended to ask more questions and talk during their lessons.

C. Freeman's (1999) research into Gardner's "crystallizing experience" with musically precocious boys found that exposure to music and parental encouragements were important to the initial crystallizing experience. Many boys indicated that the experience would not have happened without the support of their mother, father, or teacher. Evidence from the study's literature review on prodigies provides little evidence for talent as the sole factor in the child's exceptional musical ability. The role of parental support and early instruction is more important than innate talent. Within the literature review it states: "Talent is necessary but not sufficient for exceptional achievement in music; it cannot develop without extensive support, appropriate resources, and so forth."

Teacher Influences

Throughout the literature, patterns have emerged to show that teachers have a significant role in the developmental process of musically talented children. Davidson et al. (1998) suggests that the personal relationship between teacher and child when learning to play an instrument music may be particularly important. The

child's perception of the characteristics of their teacher provides important indications of their likelihood of maintaining an interest in music.

The authors continued by examining musically talented children with other children who have stopped receiving lessons and assess responses regarding personal and professional characteristics of teachers. The findings suggest musically talented children have regarded their initial teacher as a friendly, chatty, relaxed, and encouraging person. This supports the author's hypothesis: in the early stages of learning, the personal characteristics of teachers are important to promote musical development and in the later stages it becomes more important that the teachers be perceived to have good performance and musical skills.

Colprit (2000) and Siebenaler (1997) studies on teacher and student's interactions both found that uninterrupted playing time indicated poor levels of student performance and inappropriate teacher intervention. Teacher talk and teacher modeling when working with students

related to higher performance ratings. Teacher inactivity was negatively related to the student's success.

Landvogt's study (2001) gathered data from 24 talented students concerning their perceptions of teachers. From this data the author suggests that different kinds of teachers are needed for students at various stages of their development. This study also concludes that people need to move past the belief that there is a formula for successful teaching. Instead, parents and educators need to look at the whole context in which the child is taught. Landvogt suggests that development needs to be addressed within the area of talent and ask what kinds of teaching characteristics match the child's needs.

Summary

Questions regarding talent identification and talent development have been raised throughout the literature. Within this review of literature, Haroutounian's study (2000a) states effective procedures in identifying children who show potential talent needs to be reflective in the assessment and recognition of these children. By doing so, descriptive terminology to help describe musical attributes

were presented in a multi-faceted approach, which included testing, observational assessments, and criteria for the identifying potential musical talent in children.

Lastly, researchers agree that home environment, parental influences, and teacher influences play significant roles in the nurturing of talent development in musically talented children (Davidson et al., 1998; J. Freeman, 2000; Zdzinski, 1996).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children. An emphasis on parental support has emerged throughout the fine arts because researchers have studied the impact of family-child interactions and its profound effects on the musical development of the child (Christian & Snowden, 1999). The role that parents, educators, and family members serve in the identification and development of a musically gifted child were examined in this study. The following research questions were used:

Research Questions

1. What role do parents play in the musically gifted child's talent development?
2. What characteristics do parents find necessary in the musically gifted child's private lesson music teacher?
3. How is the immediate family of a musically gifted child affected by their talent development?

The study used a qualitative methodology. Data was collected through semi-structured audio taped interviews using 12 open-ended questions. Each interview lasted approximately 20 minutes. The data was analyzed and coded for recurring themes.

Subjects

Subjects in this study were teachers and parents of students who attended a public school in North Texas. The Principal of the school approved the research (Appendix A). The Texas Woman's University Human Subjects Committee approved the research (Appendix B). No attempt to control for race, gender, or family background was made due to the fact that many ethnically diverse students attended this public school.

This study is divided into two sections. In the first section, 10 private lesson music teachers from a public school in North Texas were sent a packet containing a cover letter (Appendix C) describing the study and details regarding their assistance, 5 Talent Identification Instruments (Appendix J), 5 parent cover letters (Appendix E) stapled to a parental consent form (Appendix F), a teacher consent form (Appendix D) for their participation,

and a self-addressed envelope. Teachers who wished to participate returned the teacher consent forms and Talent Identification Instruments to the researcher in the self-addressed envelope by May 8, 2002. Lastly, the teacher participant gave each identified musically gifted students parent a parent cover letter and parent consent form.

The second section of the study involved the parent participants. After the parent received the parent cover letter and parent consent form from the private lesson music teacher and determined they wished to participate they contacted the researcher by phone or email by May 24, 2002. At that time a face-to-face interview was scheduled. At the interview the parent participant returned the signed parent consent form and filled out a demographic questionnaire (Appendix G).

Potential participants could agree or decline to participate. Participation was fully voluntary and any participant could withdraw at any time.

Instrumentation

The Talent Identification Instrument (Appendix J) was adapted from J. Haroutounian's (Haroutounian, 1995, 2000a, 2000b) and Howard Gardner's (Gardner, 1985) studies

regarding information on musical intelligence and musical talent and created by the researcher to set guidelines for teachers so this study would have consistency among the numerous teachers involved in identifying musically gifted students. The interview guide (Appendix H), 12 open-ended interview questions (Appendix I), and parental demographic questionnaire were based on related literature and similar studies. The relationship between the themes, sub-themes and research questions are reported in Appendices K, L, and M. The relationship between the interview questions, themes, and sub-themes is reported in Appendix N.

Collection of Data

The teacher participants voluntarily responded to the introduction letter by returning the completed Talent Identification Instruments and teacher consent forms by May 8, 2002 in the self-addressed envelope. Next, the teacher participants gave each parent of the identified musically gifted students a parent cover letter and a parent consent form.

The parent participants voluntarily called or emailed the researcher to set an appointment for an interview by May 24, 2002. Each interview was conducted in a place the

parent participant requested. Each participant was asked to give the researcher their signed consent form and was requested to fill out a parental demographic questionnaire. The interviews began with the researcher and participant speaking freely and the purpose of the interview was explained. Next, the researcher read from the interview guide concerning issues regarding the purpose of the study, confidentiality, the nature of recording, how the data would be handled, and assigned a code number to the participant. The interview was audio taped.

The interviews were semi-structured and consisted of 12 open-ended questions which related to the three research questions. Each question was repeated until the participant had thoroughly answered the question and indicated a desire to move forward. The researcher continued to the next question until all questions had been addressed. At the end of the interview the researcher thanked the participant for their time and interest in the study. Every effort was made to conduct each of the interviews in the same manner.

Analysis of Data

Each interview was audio taped. After all the interviews were completed the tapes were given to a

professional transcriptionist. The transcriptions were copied; one was the working copy, and the other copy was locked in a cabinet in the researcher's home. Each transcript was read twice and the researcher began to group the information by writing notes in the margins and color-coding the consistencies in data. Then the data was recorded in by listing the participant's code number on one side of the grid and the categories were listed on top of the grid. Categories emerged as transcriptions were read. Marks were placed under each category and the categories were tallied and totaled. The researcher chose the following themes and sub-themes from the categories, which were recurring. Table 1 reflects the first interview question (IQ 1) and how the researcher recorded the parental responses.

Responses from the demographic questionnaire were read, analyzed, and placed in a Table 2 to easily view comparisons among the participants.

Scores from the Talent Identification Instrument were read, analyzed, and placed in a table format for better viewing (see Table 3). The information from the Talent Identification Instrument was used to compare how each

teacher participant scored the students and identified them as musically gifted. To be considered musically gifted the child needed to score between a total of 26 to 30 points on the Talent Identification Instrument.

The researcher then began to group the information based on themes. All audiotapes and transcripts were secured in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home and will be destroyed one year after completion of the researcher's thesis.

Summary

This chapter described the population of the study, qualitative design, instrumentation, collection of data, and data analysis procedures. Teacher participants were used to identify musically gifted students using the Talent Identification Instrument. Parent participants were interviewed and asked 12 open-ended questions that explored their perceptions of talent development in their musically gifted child. All participants were from a purposeful group.

Table 1

Example of Data Analysis Used to Record Interview

Question 1. (What is your involvement in your child's practice sessions?)

<i>Parental Code #</i>	<i>Beg. Age</i>	<i>Present Age</i>	<i>Gender M/F</i>	<i>Total Involvement</i>	<i>Semi-Involvement</i>	<i>No Involvement</i>
1	5	8	M		X	
2	4	9	M		X	
3	4	10	F		X	
4	7	10	F	X		
5	5	13	F		X	
6	6	9	F		X	
7	8	15	M		X	
8	3	15	F			X
9	5	12	F		X	
10	6	14	F		X	
11	3	7	M	X		
12	3	5	F	X		
13	4	5	F	X		
14	10	16	F		X	
15	10	12	F		X	
Total				4	10	1

Table 2

*Example of Matrix Used to Summarize Responses Taken From
The Demographic Questionnaire*

<i>Parental Code #</i>	<i>Parent Interviewed</i>	<i>Work F P S</i>	<i>Spouse F P S</i>	<i>Music A B C D</i>	<i>Beg. Age</i>	<i>Present Age</i>	<i>Gender M/F</i>	<i>Inst Cel/Vln.</i>	<i>Siblings Y/N</i>	<i>Play Inst.</i>
1	M	F	F	C	5	8	M	Cel	N	-
2	M	P	F	C	4	9	M	Cel	N	-
3	M	P	F	C	4	10	F	Cel	Y	Y
4	M	S	F	C	7	10	F	Vln	Y	Y
5	M	F	F	C	5	13	F	Vln	Y	Y
6	F	S	F	C	6	9	F	Cel	Y	Y
7	M	P	F	A	8	15	M	Vln	Y	Y
8	M	S	F	C	3	15	F	Vln	Y	Y
9	M	P	F	B	5	12	F	Vln	Y	Y
10	M	P	F	B	6	14	F	Vln	Y	Y
11	M	P	F	A	3	7	M	Cel	N	-
12	M	P	F	A	3	5	F	Vln	Y	Y
13	M	S	F	C	4	5	F	Vln	N	-
14	M	F	-	B	10	16	F	Cel	Y	Y
15	M	F	F	C	10	12	M	Cel	N	-

Table 3

Example of Data Analysis Matrix Used to Record Teacher Participants Scores for Identifying Musically Gifted Students

<i>Student Code #</i>	<i>Score 26</i>	<i>Score 27</i>	<i>Score 28</i>	<i>Score 29</i>	<i>Score 30</i>
1	X				
2	X				
3				X	
4	X				
5					X
6				X	
7					X
8			X		
9					X
10					X
11	X				
12		X			
13	X				
14					X
15			X		
Total	5	1	2	2	5

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents findings of data collected from parents of identified musically gifted children in a qualitative study about their perception of talent identification and talent development. The purpose of this study is to examine talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children. The first section of this chapter summarizes the descriptive information about the sample. The next section explores the themes and sub-themes of the interviews as related to the research. Direct quotes from the parents are used to illustrate the findings. The numbers after the quotes represent the code for the participant. The final section of this chapter is a summary of the data.

Description of the Sample

Ten private lesson music teachers from a public school in North Texas were sent a teacher cover letter, teacher consent form, 5 Talent Identification Instruments, 5 parent cover letters, 5 parent consent forms, and a self-addressed

stamped envelope. Six teachers responded by returning the Talent Identification Instruments and teacher consent forms. From the 6 teachers participating in the study, a total of 17 Talent Identification Instruments were returned. The researcher received 13 phone calls and 1 e-mail regarding interest in the study.

One teacher participant and 2 Talent Identification Instruments had to be discarded from the study due to a lack of response from the parent. There were exactly 5 teacher participants, 15 Talent Identification instruments, and 14 parent participants involved in the study. Although 14 interviews were completed, 15 musically gifted children were discussed. One family had two identified musically gifted children.

A parent completed the demographic questionnaire at the interview. Of the 14 parent participants, 13 were female and 1 was male. All but 1 participant indicated that there was a spouse living in the home. Stay at home mothers comprised 4 out of the 15 mothers while 7 mothers worked part time and 4 worked full time. All of the fathers except one worked full time. The exception was a father who was a stay at home parent.

The ages that the identified musically gifted child began music lessons varied. Of the 15 children discussed, 9 began a musical instrument between the ages of 3 to 5. Six of the children were between the ages of 6 to 10. Of the 15 children, 2 were 5 years old, 6 children were between the ages of 6 and 10, 7 children were between the ages of 11 and 15, and 1 child was 16 years old. Five of the children were male and 10 were female. Of the 15 musically gifted children discussed, 8 were Caucasian, 5 were Asian, 1 was Hispanic, and 1 was African-American. No efforts were made to control for race. Eight of the children played the violin and 7 children played the cello.

Many of the musically gifted children had siblings. Of the 14 families, 9 had siblings. Of the 9 families, 4 families indicated that the musically gifted child had 1 sibling, 2 families indicated the musically gifted child had 2 siblings, 1 musically gifted child had 3 siblings, and 2 families indicated that the musically gifted child had 4 siblings. Out of the 9 families who had siblings, at least one other sibling played a musical instrument.

When asked how to best describe the home environment before their child began playing a musical instrument, 3

parents indicated that a family member earned a living through musical activity such as performing or teaching. Two parents indicated that a family member was actively playing music as a hobby and that they found a great deal of pleasure in making music. Lastly, nine parents indicated that no family member actively played an instrument but music could be found in the home to a varying degree.

To be considered musically gifted the child must score a total of 26 to 30 points on the Talent Identification Instrument. According to the Talent Identification Instruments completed by the participating teachers 5 of the identified musically gifted children scored a total of 26 points, 1 scored a total of 27 points, 2 scored a total of 28 points, 2 scored a total of 29 points, and 5 children scored a total of 30 points.

Findings

A qualitative design was used for the analysis of the data collected. The findings are reported according to the following research questions:

1. What role do parents play in the musically gifted child's talent development?

2. What characteristics do parents find necessary in the musically gifted child's private lesson music teacher?
3. How is the immediate family of a musically gifted child affected by their talent development?

Participants were encouraged to express as many ideas as they could. Recurring themes and sub-themes were identified according to interview questions (IQ) and research questions (RQ) (Appendices K, L, M, and N). When quotes are presented, the number following the quote represents the respondent's code number. For example: Interview question 6 will be denoted as (IQ 6). The following themes emerged: efforts and development, family activities, teacher requirements and standards, musically gifted child's progress, sacrifices, and parental involvement. The following sub-themes emerged: parental impression of the first music teacher, motivation in relation to age, self-motivation in the child, teacher recommendations, and positive reflections on hard work.

Themes

Themes and sub-themes which emerged from the research, are presented according to the interview question that

received the most parental responses followed by an interview question that received the next highest amount of parental responses.

Efforts and development of talent.

(IQ 9) When asked the question, does the child's efforts and development of talent become a central part of family life; all 14 parents used the word yes as a response. Some examples of this data are as follows:

Yes. As a family we're all musical and we have what we call "Family Home Meeting" on Monday night and everyone has a part. We play instruments and sing. (7)

I would say, "Yes." Especially because four of my five children play, so violin concerts, practice schedules, camps, and lessons really have our calendar full. (5)

Yes, it plays a huge part in our lives. It is a big commitment. (4)

Oh yes, because it takes so much time that I think you do focus around that. It's important to him to play and to play he has to practice, so it does take a lot of time. (2)

Family activities.

(IQ 10) When asked the question, does the talent being developed provide opportunities for the family to enjoy activities together, all 14 parents answered yes. Of the 14 parents, 5 discussed how they attended concerts together

and 4 parents discussed how their children played in various recitals. Examples of these positive statements are as follows:

Oh yes, I think so. We participate in all recitals and that kind of thing. (1)

Yes, they love their recitals. They love to play and they don't mind playing and aren't afraid to play. (3)

Yes because we all support each other and attend concerts and recitals with each other so, yes, it is important. (7)

Yes it does. We are planning to take her to Fair Park Musical Garden. They have free concerts over there so we are going to take her over there to explore more music. (13)

Teacher requirements and standards.

(IQ 2) Of the 14 parents interviewed, 12 agreed that it was important to make an effort to learn the requirements and standards set by the child's music teacher. Several parents commented on how they need to be aware of what the teacher is asking so they can set goals and guide them at home.

Other parents agreed that their child had respect for the teacher when requirements and standards were set. The following statements are taken from the interviews:

I think it is important. When we start lessons at the beginning of the school year, both the parents and the family meet with the teacher and we put contracts on how many hours he needs to practice per day, when the

recitals will be, what will happen throughout the year and what her goals are. As a parent I have to set goals on what I think my son should achieve and he also sets goals on what he can do. (7)

Absolutely. Unless we know what the music teacher is asking her, there is no way we can guide her at home. If we do not have an understanding of what the music teacher is requiring we do not know how to guide her. (6)

Yes. I am aware of everything that is going on and I often sit in on the lessons and take a few notes that I am capable of taking at this point so I know what is going on. (8)

Oh, absolutely because they have to have respect for the teacher that is required. I would never throw out an idea that the teacher has suggested. (9)

Musically gifted child's progress.

(IQ 7) When asked the question do you believe the child's progress is completely dependent on his or her teacher, 12 parents agreed that the child's progress is not dependent on the teacher. Of the 12 parents, 8 commented on how the parents and teachers must work together to help the child progress. Two of the parents believed that their child has internal motivation, which gives them the desire to progress. Both of the children were over the age of 10. Several parents feel that the "right" teacher is important also to help their child progress. Some of their statements are as follows:

No. It's not completely; it's more dependent on her own internal motivation at this point. (5)

No. I do not think it is very important. I think the right teacher is a big issue. The teacher and the teacher's relationship to my son is real important. (1)

No, I believe there is a triangle. I think the child has to be willing to learn. I think the parent has the main responsibility of making sure the child is following along the way he should and the teacher has to know what direction to take the child and what is next. (4)

I think it is a triangle. I think it is the parent, teacher, and child. No, it is not completely dependent on the teacher. (8)

Sacrifices.

(IQ 11) Many parents mentioned that sacrifices were made to help promote the child's talent development. Of the 14 interviewed, 13 said yes there are sacrifices made by the family to promote the child's talent development. The words financial and time were used by 10 of the parents interviewed when they described the sacrifices. Other words used in describing the sacrifices made by the family were emotional and energy. See examples below:

Yes, there are sacrifices made by our family. The cost of lessons and instruments are major financial sacrifices. As he progresses, the length of lessons increase and the need for a better instrument is necessary. I want to make sure I give him what he needs so he doesn't get behind or lose interest. Also,

a lot of time is demanded of my family. We have lessons, rehearsals, concerts, and practice that require time from us. It is difficult at times. (15)

Yes. We have invested so much in our son I would say financially, emotionally, time spent going to lessons, concerts, and workshops, that sort of thing. (11)

Yes, it's a substantial financial investment by the time you do lessons, group lessons, orchestra lessons and you purchase a quality instrument. It is quite a substantial financial investment. More than anything it is an investment of time and energy on my part. (1)

Yes, to some extent. Again, it takes a lot of time to practice with him, watch him practice, take him to lessons and as he progresses, financially there is more expense. Instruments are more expensive, lessons are more expensive, so there is some sacrifice. (2)

Parental involvement in practice sessions.

(IQ 1) Involvement in practice sessions related to the age of the child and to the amount of years they have played the musical instrument. A theme emerged from the parents who are semi-involved in their child's practice sessions. When asked the question, what is your involvement in your child's practice sessions, 9 of the parents said they were semi-involved. Of these 9 parents, the youngest child was 8 years old and the average amount of years that the children have played a musical instrument was 5.3 years. Four parents mentioned that they were totally involved in the child's practice sessions. Of these four parents, the

youngest child was 5 years old and the average amount of years the children have played a musical instrument was 2.5 years. One parent mentioned that they are not involved at all in their child's practice sessions. This child is 15 years old and has played a musical instrument for 12 years. Here are examples of comments made by parents who are semi-involved in their child's practice sessions:

At the age they are now I sometimes have to remind them to practice. They have a practice calendar that they keep their time on but I do not sit in with them. When they were much younger I did. (9)

I make sure she practices everyday. I time her, I go over her schedule and the list of things her teacher wants her to practice. (5)

My involvement varies. We are moving towards more independent practice sessions. He would like to have independent practice sessions. I do not feel he is really quite ready for that but I think it is a good thing. (1)

I stay near by and listen carefully. I act like I am reading so she feels independent. When I hear a mistake I often comment and suggest a way to correct the problem. (14)

Sub-Themes

Parental impression of the first music teacher.

(IQ 6) When asked the question, what was your impression of the first music teacher, 7 out of the 14 parents interviewed stated that the teacher worked well with

children. Five of the 14 parents stated that the teacher was very positive. Examples of the parent's responses were:

She was very good with children and patient. (2)

Very professional, very warm and loving and worked so well with children. She was very structured. She had high standards. She does not stress the children. She knows not to press them. I've always had a good impression of her. (4)

Motivating in relation to age.

(IQ 3) Incentives were used by 6 of the 14 parents interviewed to motivate their child in the beginning. The average age for the child beginning music lessons from these 6 parents was 5.1 years old. The child's self-motivation was described by 6 other parents when discussing motivation in the beginning. The average age for the child beginning music lessons from these 6 parents was 7.2 years old. See examples below:

He motivated himself. He is the one who wanted to learn. I did not do anything. (2)

First I tried to say, "Do it because I say you have to do it" but then we moved into a system of incentives, which varies as time went on. I used to give her a quarter every time she practiced. (5)

Self-motivation perceived in the child.

(IQ 4) Of the 14 parents interviewed, 5 used the word self-motivated when describing their musically gifted child.

These parents felt that they did not find it necessary to continue to motivate their child. Here are examples of how the parents used the word self-motivated:

No. I think he is self-motivated and he is motivated by praise, which he gets a lot of. (1)

She is extremely self-motivated. I do not need to motivate her anymore. I think it shows that she is maturing mentally and as a musician. (14)

Teacher recommendations.

(IQ 8) When asked the question, if you have moved to a new teacher was it your decision or by the recommendation of the previous teacher, 5 of the 14 parents said that the previous teacher had recommended that they move to a new teacher. See examples:

They both moved to a new teacher by recommendation of the previous teacher. (9)

It was the recommendation of the previous teacher. Just as soon as the beginning class was over we moved to a new teacher and stayed there until that teacher said she had taught her all her knowledge of the violin and it is time for her to have a more advanced teacher. I cried, I did not want her to leave, but it was time to go. (5)

Positive reflection on hard work.

(IQ 12) Of the 14 parents interviewed, 5 described their work ethic with the phrase "hard work pays off." See examples:

We hope they can look at us and see that hard work pays off. We do have expectations for them around the house in terms of what music practice schedule needs to be made and what we expect their grades to be. (5)

I think my father, who is Chinese, really put a heavy work ethic in me. My husband says I am too hard on them sometimes but I think it is important. Everyone is working so hard now days it is important to continue, for everyone to keep up you know. You have to learn that hard work pays off. (9)

Summary

The chapter described the qualitative findings of the 14 interviews conducted by parents of musically gifted children. A demographic profile of the families was reported followed by the major findings from the interviews. Interviews consisted of 12 open-ended questions that related to the research questions from the study. The 6 themes and 5 sub-themes that emerged from the participant's responses and their relation to the research questions can be found in Appendices K, L, and M. Direct quotes were used to support the findings.

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS,
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the data collected during a qualitative study of 14 parents who have identified musically gifted children. The purpose of this study is to examine talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children. An overview of the study is presented first. Findings of the study are then discussed in relation to the research questions. Finally, conclusions and implications, recommendations, and limitations are explored.

Overview

This qualitative study used Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory as a lens to analyze the data. Private lesson music teachers from a North Texas public school completed a Talent Identification Instrument to identify musically gifted children in their studios and informed the parents of this study. Interviews were conducted with 14 parents to determine their perceptions of talent

identification and talent development in the home. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews that consisted of 12 open-ended questions. The interviews were audio taped, transcribed, read repeatedly, coded for themes, and analyzed for emerging themes. The 6 themes and 5 sub-themes in relation to the three research questions are listed in Appendix K, L, and M.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children. The participants in this study were asked questions about talent identification and talent development for their musically gifted child. Most parents had multiple and detailed responses. A few parents had very little to say, but all 14 parents could share insight into the talent development of their musically gifted child.

According to Zdzinski (1996), parents are their child's first music teacher and can help their achievements by providing positive attitudes towards learning. In this study, parental involvement was found to be significantly related to affective, cognitive, and performance outcomes in music. With regard to the role that parents play in

talent development, many parents remarked on the necessity to be aware of teacher requirements and standards, parental involvement in practice sessions, motivation strategies, and their child's self-motivation.

Of the 14 parents interviewed, 12 agreed that it is important to make an effort to learn the requirements and standards set by the child's music teacher. Several parents commented on how they need to be aware of what the teacher is asking so they can set goals and guide them at home. Other parents agreed that their child had respect for the teacher when requirements and standards were set. Davidson et al. (1998) suggests that the personal relationship between teacher and child when learning music may be particularly important in music instrument learning.

Involvement in practice sessions was found to be related to the age of the child and to the amount of years they had played the musical instrument. Of 14 parents interviewed, 9 parents were semi-involved in their child's practice sessions and 4 were totally involved. Bloom noted the importance of high parental involvement in talent development (Haroutounian, 2000b, Melson, Moon, Windecker-Melson, 1997).

Of the 14 parents interviewed, 6 used incentives in the beginning to help motivate their child. The average age for the child beginning music lessons from these 6 parents was 5.1 years old. Six other parents described their child as having self-motivation in the beginning. The average age for these children was 7.2 years. The age of the child has a relation to the motivation technique used by the parent.

When asked if motivation was presently needed, 5 of the 14 parents interviewed used the word "self-motivated" and did not find it necessary to continue to motivate their child. Haroutounian (2000a) states that motivating factors should be included in assessing musically gifted children. This type of motivation found in children is self-initiated and internal.

With regard to the characteristics parents find necessary in the child's private lesson music teacher parents remarked on the gifted child's progress, teacher recommendations, and impressions of the first music teacher. Of the 14 parents interviewed, 12 parents agreed that the child's progress is not dependent on the teacher and 8 of these parents commented on how the parents and teacher must work together to help the child progress. Two

of the parents believe that the child has internal motivation, which gives them the desire to progress. These children were both over the age of 10. Several parents feel that the "right" teacher is important to help their child progress. This response by the parents is supported by Cooper's (2001) study, which found that parents and family play the principal role in the education and support of talented children.

In Davidson et al. (1998), findings suggested musically talented children have regarded their initial teacher as a friendly, chatty, relaxed, and encouraging person. The study continued to say that the personal characteristics of teachers are important to promote musical development. Few of parents interviewed in this study support Davidson's findings. Seven out of the 14 parents interviewed stated that the teacher worked well with children. Five continued to say that the teacher was very positive.

Landvogt's study (2001), found that different kinds of teachers are needed for students at various stages of their development. When asked the question, if you have moved to a new teacher was it your decision or by the recommendation

of the previous teacher, 5 of the 14 parents said that the previous teacher had recommended that they move to a new teacher. Seven students had not moved to a new teacher, 1 student asked to move to a new teacher, and 1 parent moved the child to a new teacher.

According to J. Freeman (2000), musically talented children were the most successful when they lived in homes that were particularly generous in encouragement, material provisions made for practicing, and their lifestyle. With regard to the immediate family of a musically gifted child affected by their talent development, this study agrees with the above research.

All 14 parents responded yes when asked the questions, does the child's efforts and development of talent become a central part of family life and does the talent being developed provide opportunities for the family to enjoy activities together. Five parents continued to say that they attended concerts together and 4 parents discussed how their children played in various recitals.

Many parents mentioned that sacrifices were made to help promote the child's talent development. Of the 14 interviewed, 13 said "yes" there are sacrifices made by the

family to promote the child's talent development. The words financial and time were used by 10 of the parents interviewed when they were describing their sacrifices. Other words used in describing the types of sacrifices made by the family included emotionally and energy.

Lastly, 5 parents described their families work ethic with the phrase, "hard work pays off." This sub-theme is supported by research stating that parents and family play the principal role in the education of gifted children and that they need the support and positive influences of the home environment (Christian & Snowden, 1999).

Surprisingly a low number of parents commented on the musically gifted child's friends as being helpers in finding first teachers (1) and motivational tools (3). When it was commented on, the child being discussed was older than 9 years of age. Possibly this is due to the children belonging to various orchestras and ensembles.

Various comments were made regarding how the parent decided on the first music teacher. Ten different responses were recorded. Of the 14 parents, 3 parents used a teacher that worked for the school and 2 parents let their child decide on the teacher.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following was concluded:

1. Most of the parents play an important role in the musically gifted child's talent development.
2. The musically gifted child's age relates to self-motivation and parental involvement.
3. Most parents find distinct characteristics in the musically gifted child's private lesson music teacher.
4. All of the immediate family members of a musically gifted child are affected by their talent development.

All but 2 parents agreed that it is important to make an effort to learn the requirements and standards set by the child's music teacher. The 2 parents who felt it was mildly important had older musically gifted children who had been taking music lessons for a minimum of 5 years. Possibly they assumed the child should be responsible for the requirements given their age and years studying an instrument.

Both the parental involvement in a child's practice sessions and perceived ways of motivation were found to have a relationship with the age of the child. The younger child had more parental involvement while the older child had little parental involvement in practice sessions. Freeman's (1999) research found that the role of parental support and early instruction is more important than innate talent. The one child that currently had no parental support is 15 years old and has studied the violin since age 3.

Six parents used incentives to motivate their child in the beginning. The average age found for using incentives was 5.1 years. Parents of older children described them as having self-motivation and the average age for this child was 7.2 years old. The age of the child had a significant relationship to the type of motivational tools needed for parental involvement.

Although most parents described specific characteristics regarding their child's music teacher, little was mentioned of how they found the first teacher. Three of the 14 parents said they used a teacher that worked in the child's school and 2 parents let their child

decided on a teacher. There were no consistent answers among the parents when discussing how they decided on the first music teacher.

There was a consistency found between the parents when discussing the child's progress, teacher recommendations, and impressions of the first music teacher. Most parents agreed that the child's progress was not dependent on the teacher. Parents also agreed that the teacher's ability to work well with children and be positive helped promote musical development. This is supported by Davidson et al. (1998) study, which suggests musically talented children have regarded their initial teacher as a friendly, chatty, relaxed, and encouraging person.

Seven of the students had not moved to a new teacher and have studied an instrument for an average of 3.5 years. Five of the children had moved to a new teacher by the recommendation of the previous teacher and have studied the instrument for an average of 6.8 years. This is supported by Landvogt's study (2001), which found that different kinds of teachers are needed for students at various stages of their development.

All parents commented about the efforts and development of talent, family activities, and sacrifices made by the musically gifted child's immediate family. The responses by the parents is supported by a recent study suggesting that parents and the family play the principal role in the education of gifted children (Chrisitan & Snowden, 1999). Every parent responded "yes" when asked about the child's efforts and development of talent becoming a central part of family life. Also, there were positive responses for each parent when asked, "Does the talent being developed provide opportunities for the family to enjoy activities together?" Many commented on how the family enjoys concerts and recital together.

Many parents mentioned that sacrifices were made by the family to promote the child's talent development. Sacrifices were described as being financial burdens such as tuition costs and quality instrument prices. Time was also mentioned by several people as being a family sacrifice. None of the parents used words that would indicate that the sacrifices created a major problem within the family.

Implications

It has been during the last decade that the gifted field has shown an interest in "musical intelligence" (Haroutounian, (2000a). Research into musically gifted children has just begun to teach specialists, educators, and parents how to identify and develop talent. Neurological research has demonstrated the connection to music and importance of music training at a young age (Dennis et al., 1997). The parents perceptions of their musically gifted child's talent identification and talent development in this study may offer practical and clinical implications for other parents, specialists, and educators working in this field.

Of particular interest is the perception of how the immediate family is affected by the talent development of a musically gifted child living in the home and the importance of the parental support. There are important issues concerning the talent identification and talent development of musically gifted children.

Limitations

Several factors limited this study. The teacher participants were all private lesson music teachers from

one particular North Texas public school, which has an unusually large orchestra program. The sample of parent participants included more females than males (13:1). The musically gifted children discussed by their parents included more females than males (10:5).

The majority of these parent participants were married and worked part-time. A more heterogeneous sample with divorced parents or both parents working may have reflected different perceptions from the parents.

The musically gifted children studied either the violin or cello (8:7). Possibly different perceptions would have been discovered if the children had studied a more diverse selection of instruments.

Qualitative research has inherent limitations. With qualitative research, replications are difficult because the environment is always changing. The nature of qualitative research dictates that the researcher personally interprets the data and therefore the researcher's perspective inevitably influences the findings. The purpose of this study was to examine parents' perceptions of talent identification and talent development in their musically gifted children at this time, not to be

representatives of all parents who have musically gifted children.

Recommendations for Future Research

There has been little research on the perceptions of parents who have musically gifted children. This study viewed parents who had identified musically gifted children who ranged in age from 5 to 18. Perhaps more collaborative longitudinal studies could be developed in observing musically gifted children from an even younger age. More definitive research could be made to pinpoint the detailed characteristics these special children possess. The longitudinal role of educators, parents, and family environments could be established.

Possibly more ethnographic studies could be developed to determine the roles of educators and parents of musically gifted children. This study viewed children from an unusually large orchestra program, which has a great deal of community support. More studies could be developed that observe children from the general public so all socioeconomic and cultures could be identified. Talent identification and talent development have proven to be

important research areas regarding musically gifted children.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Approval Letter from School

Appendix B

Approval Letter from Human Subjects Review Committee

TEXAS WOMAN'S
UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
P.O. Box 425619
Denton, TX 76204-5619
Phone: (940) 898-3375
Fax: (940) 898-3416
e-mail: IRB@twu.edu

April 5, 2002

Ms. Kerri Harris-Keller

Social Security #

Dear Ms. Harris-Keller:

Re: Perceptions of Talent Identification and Talent Development in Musically Gifted Children: A Qualitative Study

The above referenced study has been reviewed by a committee of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and appears to meet our requirements in regard to protection of individuals' rights.

If applicable, agency approval letters obtained should be submitted to the IRB upon receipt prior to any data collection at that agency. A copy of your newly approved consent form has been stamped as approved by the IRB and is attached, along with a copy of the annual/final report. Please use this consent form which has the most recent approval date stamp when obtaining consent from your participants. The signed consent forms and final report are to be filed with the Institutional Review Board at the completion of the study.

This approval is valid one year from the date of this letter. Furthermore, according to HHS regulations, another review by the IRB is required if your project changes. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Institutional Review Board at the phone number listed above.

Sincerely,



Dr. Gail Davis, Chair
Institutional Review Board - Denton

enc.

cc Dr. Lora Ann Neill, Department of Family Sciences
Dr. Karen Petty, Department of Family Sciences
Graduate School

Appendix C
Teacher Introduction Letter



TEXAS WOMAN'S
UNIVERSITY

1901 - 2001 CENTENNIAL

Department of Family Sciences
College of Professional Education
P.O. Box 425769, Denton, TX 76204-5769
T 940-898-2685 F 940-898-2676

April 22, 2002

Dear Teacher,

My name is Kerri Harris-Keller and I am a music teacher in the Dallas area. I am currently finishing my Master's degree in Child Development from Texas Woman's University. As the final requirement of my graduate work, I am creating a study entitled, *Perceptions of Talent Identification and Talent Development in Musically Gifted Children: A Qualitative Study*.

The purpose of this study is to examine the parent's perceptions of talent identification and talent development in their musically gifted child. I am looking to discover the role that parents play in the child's development, characteristics parents find necessary in the child's private lesson music teacher, and how the immediate family of this child is affected by their talent development.

This study has two sections. The first section involves private music lesson teachers identifying musically gifted students from their studios between the ages of 5-18 using the Talent Identification Instrument. The second section of the study involves a 30-minute face-to-face interview with the parent or parents of the identified musically gifted child.

I am in need of several teachers who can identify musically gifted children from their private music lesson studios using the Talent Identification Instrument. I have enclosed 5 Talent Identification Instruments, a basic consent form, a parent cover letter stapled to a parent consent form, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to be returned to me.

I would like to be able to interview 15 parents of musically gifted children for this study. If I receive more than 15 participants than I will randomly pick the participants from the final group.

Please know that all the information you give me is confidential and your participation in this study is completely voluntary. The parents of the identified musically gifted children will only know that you, as their teacher, identified their child as being musically gifted. They will never see the Talent Identification Instrument. After the parents have made contact with me to set up an interview, they will be assigned a code number and be referred to by that code number for the rest of the study.

If you wish to participate in this study, please return the completed Talent Identification Instrument and consent form by May 8, 2002 in the self-addressed envelope provided. I also request that you give the parents of the identified musically gifted child a parent cover letter and parent consent form. This will give each parent the information regarding the study and how he or she can participate.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Petty or me.

Thank you so much for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

Kerri Harris-Keller

Principal Investigator of this study:
Kerri Harris-Keller

Faculty Research Advisor:
Karen Petty, Ph.D.
(940) 898-2698
kpetty@twu.edu

Appendix D
Teacher Consent Form

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
SUBJECT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Perceptions of Talent Identification and Talent Development
in Musically Gifted Children: A Qualitative Study

Principal Investigator of this study:
Kerri Harris-Keller

Faculty Research Advisor of this study:
Karen Petty, Ph.D. 940-898-2698

You are being asked to participate in a research study for Mrs. Harris-Keller's thesis at Texas Woman's University. The purpose of this study is to examine perceptions of talent identification and talent development in musically gifted children. As part of this study you are being asked to identify musically gifted children from your private music lesson studio using the Talent Identification Instrument. After you identify the musically gifted children you will return the completed Talent Identification Instruments with the name of the parent or parents of the identified musically gifted child in the self-addressed stamped envelope by May 8, 2002. You are also asked to give the parent or parents of the identified musically gifted child a parent cover letter and parent consent form to take home. At no time will the parent see the Talent Identification Instrument or know how you scored the Instruments.

Only the researcher and the research advisor, Dr. Petty, will see the Talent Identification Instrument. All data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home until the time they are destroyed on January 1, 2003. The investigation involves the risk of release of confidential information, improper release of data, and the loss of privacy. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. Teacher code numbers, rather than names, will be used on the transcripts and in the final report. It is anticipated that the data will be published for thesis, books, and/or journals. However, names or other identifying information will not be included in any publication.

Subject Initials

Participants face a slight risk of boredom or fatigue associated with participating in this study and possible discomfort as you fill out the Talent Identification Instrument; however, discontinuing can lessen this the participation in the study.

The only direct benefit of this study to you is at the completion of the study; a summary of the results will be mailed to you upon request.

If you have any questions about the research study you should ask the researchers: their phone numbers are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact Ms. Tracy Lindsay in the Office of Research & Grants Administration at 940-898-3377 or email IRB@TWU.EDU.

The researcher will try to prevent any problems that could happen to you because of this research. You should let the researcher know at once if there is a problem and they will help you. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime without penalty. If you have any questions, please contact the investigators at the above phone numbers.

Signature of Participant

Date

Check here if you would like to receive a summary of the results of this study and list below the address to which this summary should be sent.

Check here if you do not wish to receive a copy of the results of this study.

Appendix E

Parent Introduction Letter



TEXAS WOMAN'S
UNIVERSITY

1901 - 2001 CENTENNIAL

Department of Family Sciences
College of Professional Education
P.O. Box 425769, Denton, TX 76204-5769
T 940-898-2685 F 940-898-2676

April 22, 2002

Dear Parent,

My name is Kerri Harris-Keller and I am a music teacher in the Dallas area. I am currently finishing my Master's degree in Child Development from Texas Woman's University. As the final requirement of my graduate work, I am creating a study titled, *Perceptions of Talent Identification and Talent Development in Musically Gifted Children: A Qualitative Study*.

The purpose of this study is to examine your perceptions of talent identification and talent development in your musically gifted child. I am looking to discover the role that you play in the child's development, characteristics you find necessary in the child's private lesson music teacher, and how the immediate family of this child is affected by their talent development.

Your private lesson music teacher has given you this letter because they have used a Talent Identification Instrument that I sent them. In using this instrument, they have identified your child as "musically gifted."

I am in need of 15 participants to complete this project. If you are interested in participating in this study you may contact me by phone or e-mail before May 24, 2002 to set up a face-to-face interview that will last approximately 30 minutes. At that time I will also request that you return the consent form and fill out a short parental demographic questionnaire.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Dr. Petty or me.

Thank you so much for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

Kerri Harris-Keller

Principal Investigator of this study:

Faculty Research Advisor:

Karen Petty, Ph.D.

(940) 898-2698

kpetty@twu.edu

Appendix F
Parent Consent Form

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
SUBJECT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Perceptions of Talent Identification and Talent Development
in Musically Gifted Children: A Qualitative Study

Principal Investigator of this study:
Kerri Harris-Keller

Faculty Research Advisor of this study:
Karen Petty, Ph.D. 940-898-2698

You are being asked to participate in a research study for Mrs. Harris-Keller's thesis at Texas Woman's University. The purpose of this study is to examine your perceptions of talent identification and talent development in your musically gifted child. As a part of this study you will be asked to contact the researcher by phone or e-mail before May 24, 2002 to set up a face-to-face interview. The interview will last approximately 30 minutes. At the time of the interview, you are also being asked to complete a short Parental Demographic Questionnaire. The interview will be audio taped and analyzed after transcription. Each interview will be audio taped to ensure that all information is received completely and accurately. Only the researcher, transcriber, and the research advisor, Dr. Petty, will hear the tapes or see the transcripts. Each interviewee will be given a code number in order to insure confidentiality. All data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home until the time they are destroyed.

The investigation involves the risk of release of confidential information, improper release of data, and the loss of privacy. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. The interview will take place in a private location agreed upon by you and the researcher. Code numbers, rather than names, will be used on the audiotapes, transcripts and in the final report. You should not state your name, or any other's individual's name, during the interview. If you inadvertently do state a name, this name will not be transcribed. The tapes will be stored in a locked filing cabinet until January 1, 2003, and then they will be destroyed. It is anticipated that the

data will be published for thesis, books, and/or journals. However, names or other identifying information will not be included in any publication.

Participants face a slight risk of boredom or fatigue associated with participating in this study; however, this will be lessened by the researcher paying close attention and allowing you to speak freely and openly or rest for periods if needed. There is a slight risk of discomfort as a result of the questions being asked. Please feel free to not answer the questions or stop the interview at any time.

The only direct benefit of this study to you is at the completion of the study; a summary of the results will be mailed to you upon request.

If you have any questions about the research study you should ask the researchers: their phone numbers are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact Ms. Tracy Lindsay in the Office of Research & Grants Administration at 940-898-3377 or email IRB@TWU.EDU .

The researcher will try to prevent any problems that could happen because of this research. You should let the researchers know at once if there is a problem and they will help you. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty. If you have any questions, please contact the investigators at the above phone number. You will be given a copy of this dated and signed consent form to keep.

Signature of Participant

Date

The above consent form was read, discussed, and signed in my presence. In my opinion, the person signing said consent form did so freely and with full knowledge of its contents.

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix G
Parental Demographic Questionnaire

Date of Interview: _____
Code Number: _____

Parental Demographic Questionnaire

Please provide the following information about your family. All responses will be kept confidential. Please do not include your name or the name of family members on this form.

1. What is your relationship to your musically gifted child?

Mother or Father

2. Are you employed:

Full Time Part Time Stay at home

3. If married, is your spouse employed:

Full Time Part Time Stay at home

4. Before your child began playing a musical instrument, how would you best describe the home environment?

_____ A family member earned a living through musical activity such as performing or teaching. Music was actively heard in the home.

_____ A family member was actively playing music as a hobby. They found a great deal of pleasure in their music making. Music was actively heard in the home.

_____ No one in the home actively played an instrument but music can be found in the home to a varying degree.

_____ No interest at all prior to the child's involvement.

5. What age did your musically gifted child begin music lessons? _____

6. What age is your musically gifted child presently? _____

7. What gender is your musically gifted child?
Male or Female

8. Which musical instrument is your gifted child play?

9. Does the musically gifted child have siblings? If yes,
what age are they and do they play a musical instrument?
Yes No

Appendix H
Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Rapport building:

The participants will be greeted cheerfully and thanked for their participation in the study.

Begin Interview:

The purpose of this study is to examine your perceptions of the talent identification and talent development of your musically gifted child. Your child has been identified by their private music teacher as a musically gifted child. I am interested in learning about what your family does to help develop your child's talent. I will be audio taping this interview so that I can make sure that I hear all of the information you give me. I want to be sure to include all of your thoughts when I study all of the interviews together. Everything you say is important to me and to this study. There are no right or wrong answers and you can refuse to answer any questions I ask, if it makes you uncomfortable. Your name is not going to be used at any time; everyone will be given a code number. I want you to be assured that what you tell me is between you and me only. Once I have written down everything you have said from the tapes, I will erase the tapes and shred the written reports within one year of this interview.

Do you have any questions? Let's begin.

(Start Tape) Date of interview _____

Interviewee's code number _____

Begin Study Questions.

Appendix I
Interview Questions

Questions

1. What is your involvement in your child's practice sessions?
2. Do you believe it is important that you make an effort to learn the requirements and standards set by the child's music teacher?
3. How did you motivate your child regarding their talent development in the beginning?
4. Do you find it necessary to continue to motivate your child?
5. Describe how you decided on the first private music teacher?
6. What was your impression of the first private music teacher?
7. Do you believe the child's progress is completely dependent on his/her teacher?
8. If you have moved to a new teacher was it your decision or by the recommendation of the previous teacher?
9. Does the child's efforts and development of talent become a central part of family life?
10. Does the talent being developed provide opportunities for the family to enjoy activities together?
11. Have major sacrifices needed to be made by you or your family in order to promote the child's talent development?
12. How do you describe your families work ethic?

Appendix J
Talent Identification Instrument

TALENT IDENTIFICATION INSTRUMENT

If you believe you may be teaching a musically gifted child please read through the Talent Identification Instrument. Place a check on the line next to the statement if you see this certain quality in your student. At the end of the Instrument add your total number of checks. If you have placed 26 or more checks, your student qualifies as musically gifted according to this Talent Identification Instrument.

This instrument was adapted from J. Haroutounian's (Haroutounian, 1995, 2000a, 2000b) and Howard Gardner's (Gardner, 1985) studies regarding information on musical intelligence and musical talent. This instrument is being used to set guidelines for teachers so this study will have consistency among the numerous teachers involved in identifying musically gifted students.

The identification of musically talented students requires recognition and assessment of the perceptive sensory capacities of music aptitude or "musical intelligence" as well as the behavioral characteristics observable in musical behavior/performance. There are four categories of criteria indicative of musical talent:

- (1) Perceptual awareness and discrimination
 - perceptual awareness of sound
 - rhythmic sense
 - sense of pitch
- (2) Creative interpretation
- (3) Musical behavior/performance
- (4) Motivation

Perceptual Awareness and Discrimination:

Perceptual Awareness of sound

The student who is perceptually aware of sound:

___ is keenly aware of sound

___ listens with focused concentration

___ can sense sound inwardly and remember it

___ can hear slight differences in sounds, melodies, and rhythms

- ___ can isolate and identify individual sounds or musical ideas in a complex musical or sound context

Rhythmic Sense

The student with a fine rhythmic sense:

- ___ can feel and maintain a steady pulse in performance
- ___ can internally discriminate differences in rhythms
- ___ recognizes and adjusts to slight differences in rhythms
- ___ can repeat and creatively extend rhythmic ideas

Sense of Pitch

The student who has a fine sense of pitch:

- ___ can internally discriminate differences in pitch
- ___ can remember melodies and repeat them
- ___ can pick out tunes on their instrument

Creative Interpretation

The student who creatively interprets:

- ___ enjoys extending, manipulating, and experimenting with sound
- ___ moves to music
- ___ is sensitive to the mood of music heard and performed
- ___ is eager to express ideas through music
- ___ enjoys shaping and refining musical ideas
- ___ shows a sense of personal involvement in performance

Musical Behavior/Performance

The student who shows potential talent through musical behavior/performance:

- ___ shows a natural, physical ease in movement, or performance
- ___ is eager to express emotion through performance
- ___ shows evidence of listening and shaping interpretive ideas while performing
- ___ communicates interpretive sensitivity in performance and in response to music
- ___ performs with a fluid sense of rhythmic pulse
- ___ seeks to improve physical performance capabilities

Motivation

The student who shows internal motivation in musical work:

- ___ focuses intently while engaged in musical tasks
- ___ can concentrate for extended periods of time during musical practice
- ___ shows persistence and perseverance in musical tasks
- ___ enjoys working independently in musical tasks
- ___ refines and critiques musical work of self and others
- ___ sets high standards

___ TOTAL NUMBER OF CHECKS

Parents Name: _____

What musical instrument does the identified musically gifted child play? _____

Appendix K

Themes Identified Through Research Questions

Themes Identified Through Research Questions

Research Questions

1. What role do parents play in the musically gifted child's talent development?
2. What characteristics do parents find necessary in the musically gifted child's private lesson music teacher?
3. How is the immediate family of a musically gifted child affected by their talent development?

Themes

- (T 1.) Efforts and development of talent.
- (T 2.) Family activities.
- (T 3.) Teacher requirements and standards.
- (T 4.) Musically gifted child's progress.
- (T 5.) Sacrifices.
- (T 6.) Parental involvement in practice sessions.

Appendix L

Sub-Themes Identified Through Research Questions

Sub-Themes Identified Through Research Questions

Research Questions

1. What role do parents play in the musically gifted child's talent development?
2. What characteristics do parents find necessary in the musically gifted child's private lesson music teacher?
3. How is the immediate family of a musically gifted child affected by their talent development?

Sub-Themes

- (ST 1.) Parental impression of the first music teacher.
- (ST 2.) Motivation in relation to age.
- (ST 3.) Self-Motivation in the child.
- (ST 4.) Teacher recommendations.
- (ST 5.) Positive reflection on hard work

Appendix M

Table of Themes and Sub-Themes Identified Through Research
Questions

Table of Themes and Sub-Themes Identified Through
Research Questions

Research Question (RQ)	Themes (T) Sub-Themes (ST)
1	T 3, 6 ST 2, 3
2	T 4 ST 1, 4
3	T 1, 2, 5 ST 5

Appendix N

Table of the Relationship Between Interview Questions,
Themes, and Sub-Themes

Table of the Relationship Between Interview Questions,
Themes, and Sub-Themes

Interview Questions (IQ)	Themes (T) Sub-Themes (ST)
IQ 1. What is your involvement in your child's practice sessions?	(T6) Parental involvement in practice sessions.
IQ 2. Do you believe it is important that you make an effort to learn the requirements and standards set by the child's music teacher?	(T3) Teacher requirements and standards.
IQ 3. How did you motivate your child regarding their talent development in the beginning?	(ST2) Motivation in relation to age.
IQ 4. Do you find it necessary to continue to motivate your child?	(ST3) Self-motivation in the child.
IQ 5. Describe how you decided on the first music teacher?	N/A
IQ 6. What was your impression of the first teacher?	(ST1) Parental impression of the first music teacher.
IQ 7. Do you believe the child's progress is completely dependent on his/her teacher?	(T4) Musically gifted child's progress.
IQ 8. If you have movers to a new teacher was it your decision or by the recommendation of the previous teacher?	(ST4) Teacher recommendations.
IQ 9. Does the child's efforts and development of talent become a central part of family life?	(T1) Efforts and development.
IQ 10. Does the talent being developed provide opportunities for the family to enjoy activities together?	(T2) Family activities.
IQ 11. Have major sacrifices needed to be made by you or your family in order to promote the child's talent development?	(T5) Sacrifices.
IQ 12. How do you describe your families work ethic?	(ST5) Positive reflection on hard work.