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Introduction

- GT Students from Low Income Families
- Fewer identified for placement in GT programs (Ford, Harris, Tyson, & Trotman, 2002; Van Tassel-Baska, Patton, & Prillaman, 1991)
 - Differ from other gifted students (Slocumb & Payne, 2000)
 - Dialogue, cognitive skills, home environment
- Enrichment programs for GT Students
- Opportunities not provided in a regular classroom setting (Olszewski-Kubilius, 2003)
 - Increases self-concept (Feldhusen, Sayler, Nielsen, & Kolloff 1990; Kolloff & Moore, 1989; Rinn, 2006)
 - Incorporates differentiation
 - Purdue's Three Stage Model (Moon, Feldhusen, & Dillan 1994) – improves critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Super Saturday
- Enrichment program for gifted and talented students in grades Pre-K through 8 (Feldhusen & Wyman, 1980)
 - All content at levels two or more grades above the students' actual grade level
 - High-quality instructors - certified teachers, graduate students, or doctoral students who attend a training session prior to teaching in the program
- Project HOPE
- Funded by Jack Kent Cook Foundation
 - 5 participating school corporations
 - Provides full tuition, free transportation, and free materials to Super Saturday and Super Summer programs

The purpose of this study was to learn about the experiences and perceptions of K-5 students participating in Project HOPE during the Fall of 2008. We chose participants from our pool of HOPE Scholars and observed them in Super Saturday classes, and then interviewed them about their Super Saturday experiences.

Method

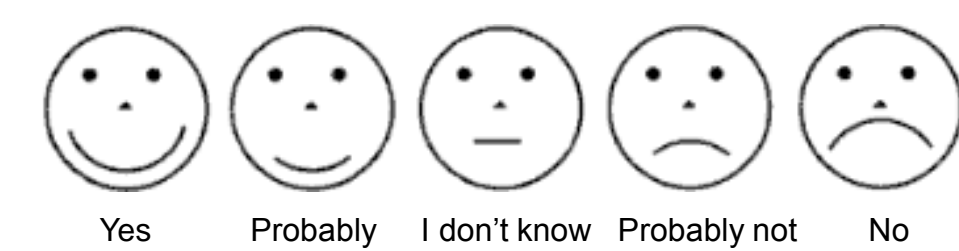
Participants

- Schools – 5 participating school corporations
- Students
 - Identified as low-income and qualified as a HOPE Scholar
 - All HOPE Scholars were give consent and assent forms – 37 out of 113 were completed
 - Final sample – 33 out of 37 were either interviewed and/or observed by HOPE staff

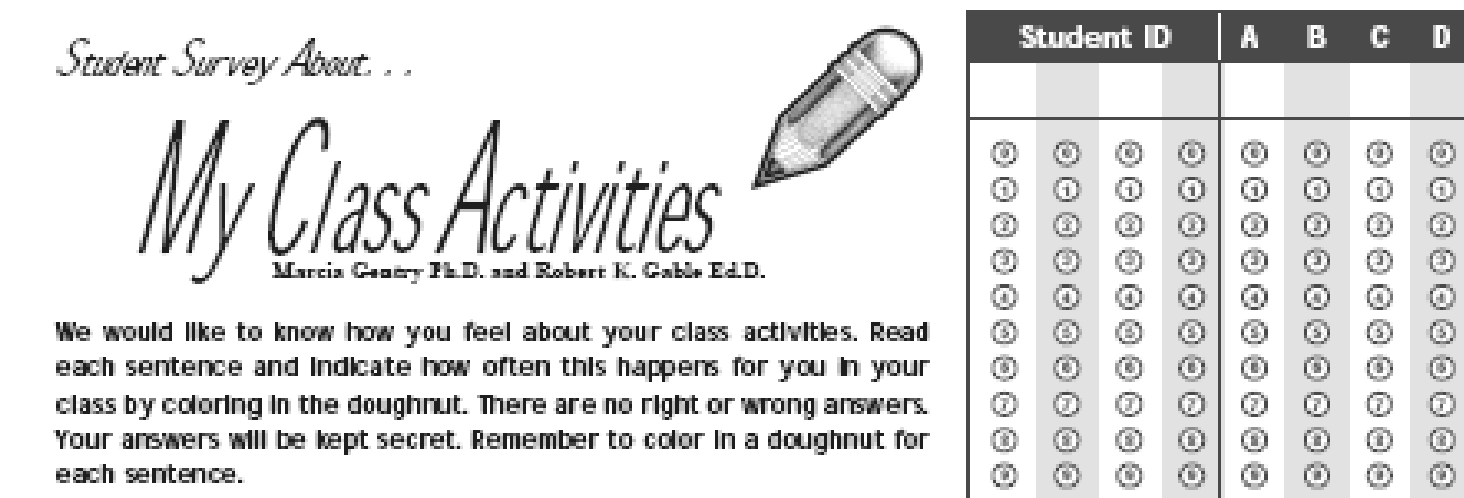
Design

- Grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) – observations and interviews
- Team of researchers - assisted with analysis, discussion, coding, and constant comparison (Patton, 2002)
- Descriptive data from student program evaluations were compared – consented HOPE vs. non-consented HOPE and HOPE vs. non HOPE
- Observation protocol – observed each participant for 30 minutes
- Interview protocol
 - Interviewed on 4th or 5th day of Super Saturday
 - Semi-structured interview questions

2008 GERI Super Saturday Program Student (Primary Grade) Evaluation Form Class:



| | |
|--|--|
| | 1. I want to learn more about the things in this class. |
| | 2. In this class, we did many interesting activities. |
| | 3. I was able to do the work in this class. |
| | 4. I worked hard in this class. |
| | 5. I like what I learned in this class. |
| | 6. My teacher made this class interesting. |
| | 7. My teacher explained hard lessons so I could understand them. |
| | 8. I had fun in this class. |



| Student ID | A | B | C | D |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. What I do in my class fits my interests. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. I have an opportunity to work on things in my class that interest me. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. What I do in my class gives me interesting and new ideas. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. I study interesting topics in my class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. The teacher involves me in interesting learning activities. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. What I learn in my class is interesting to me. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. What I do in my class is interesting. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. My class has helped me explore my interests. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. The activities I do in my class are challenging. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. I have to think to solve problems in my class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. I use challenging materials and books in my class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. I challenge myself by trying new things. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. My work can make a difference. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 14. I find the work in this class demanding. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 15. I am challenged to do my best in class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 16. What we do in class fits my abilities. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 17. This class is difficult. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 18. I can choose to work in a group. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 19. I can choose to work alone. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 20. When we work together I can choose my partners. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 21. I can choose my own projects. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 22. When there are many jobs, I can choose the ones that suit me. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 23. I can choose materials to work with in the class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 24. I can choose an audience for my product. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 25. I look forward to my class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 26. I have fun in my class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 27. The teacher makes learning fun. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 28. I like what I do in my class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 29. I like working in my class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 30. The activities I do in my class are enjoyable. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 31. I like the projects I work on in my class. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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Project HOPE Observation Protocol

Observer: _____ Date: _____

Participant Name/ID: _____ Class: _____

| Time | Behavior Observed | | X Behavior Not Observed | |
|---------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| | Engaged in Activity | Interaction with Instructor | Engaged with Peers | Peer Interactions Positive +/- Negative |
| 5 min. | | | | |
| 10 min. | | | | |
| 15 min. | | | | |
| 20 min. | | | | |
| 25 min. | | | | |
| 30 min. | | | | |

Observation Notes: _____

Project HOPE Interview Protocol

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Participant Name/ID: _____ Class: _____

1. Tell me about your Super Saturday experience.
2. What did you learn?
3. What did you like best?
4. What did you like least?
5. Would you want to come again? Why or why not?

Results

Qualitative Findings

- Four major themes
 - Students had positive experiences (22 out of 26)
 - Students learned new, above grade-level concepts (25 out of 26)
 - Students participated in interactive learning (21 out of 26)
 - Students experienced social support (6 of 26 interviewed, 24 out of 26 observed)
- Students had positive experiences
 - AR described a positive experience in Art Around the World, "...sometimes we visit places in our imaginations and I like it" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
 - KF, in Veterinary Medicine described why she would return to the Super Saturday program, "...I think it's a fun experience learning about things you really want to learn about" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
- Students learned new, above grade-level concepts
 - CM described what she learned in Electrical Engineering, "Like, about electrons and electricity and stuff. Like electric things and computers and stuff like that" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
 - CR3, in Web Design, described what she learned by saying, "I learned how to do hyperlinks...and how to add pages on websites" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
- Students participated in interactive learning
 - EG, enrolled in Veterinary Medicine for grades 3-4, also described the interactive learning that was occurred in her class, "We dissected a pig's heart...a sheep's brain" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
 - When IM1 was asked what he liked best at Super Saturday he said, "Probably taking floppy disks apart and stuff" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
- Students experienced social support
 - CR3 in Web Design believed that the best thing about her Super Saturday experience was, "Probably meeting new friends" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
 - CR1, in Veterinary Medicine, described a social experience by saying, "...there was this group and they didn't want to do it but I encouraged them to do it" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
- Interview question number four asked students what they liked least about the program.
 - KF described his least favorite aspect about his Veterinary Medicine class, "That we don't dissect something every day" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).
 - AT, from Web Design, stated, "Some things you just have to try different things and if they don't work, it kind of gets me frustrated" (personal interview, November 8, 2008).

Descriptive Findings

- The students who attended the last day of Super Saturday completed an evaluation of their class using either the Primary Grade Evaluation or My Class Activities (MCA)
- Primary Grade Evaluation Form
 - HOPE consent (n = 7, = 4.68, SD = .28)
 - HOPE non-consent (n = 17, = 4.61, SD = .20)
 - non-HOPE (n = 55, = 4.56, SD = .15)
- My Class Activities consists of 31 items that measure: interest, challenge, choice, and enjoyment

Means and Standard Deviations of My Classroom Activities

| | n = 135 | | n = 18 | | n = 34 | |
|-----------|---------|-----|--------|------|--------|------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Interest | 4.26 | .65 | 4.42 | .46 | 4.24 | .94 |
| Challenge | 3.50 | .74 | 3.51 | .82 | 3.34 | .87 |
| Choice | 3.29 | .95 | 3.57 | 1.08 | 3.23 | .96 |
| Enjoyment | 4.39 | .71 | 4.38 | .58 | 4.44 | 1.45 |

- MANOVA was completed
 - (Wilks' $\lambda = 0.8335$, $df = 129$, $p = 0.8335$)
- The high means across all groups on these subscales also indicate that on average all students viewed their experiences favorably
- Based on this finding we can infer that the 33 HOPE Scholars who consented provide a good representation of all HOPE Scholars who participated in fall 2008, as the constructs measured are similar to the qualitative themes.

Discussion

- Supports previous findings that describe the social and academic benefits of special programs for gifted students (Olszewski-Kubilius, 1989)
- Gifted students from low-income homes who receive financial support can successfully achieve in out-of-school enrichment programs
- Students from low-income homes can gain many of the social and academic benefits (Olszewski-Kubilius, 1989) that other gifted students who participate in enrichment programs receive.
- HOPE Scholars did not differ from other students with regard to their evaluation of their program experiences.
- We can conclude that their positive experiences and interactions indicate that they enjoyed and felt comfortable in an out-of-school enrichment program

Limitations

The findings of this qualitative study are limited because these are results from one out-of-school enrichment program. This program had certain criteria that the students had to meet in order to participate in this program. Other programs may not have the same criteria. In addition, enrichment programs can vary widely in their curriculum, instructors, and student population. Because of this variability among programs, we cannot generalize these findings to other enrichment programs that provide opportunities for low-income gifted students.

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