 Action Research Prospectus

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**Practical Life in Education - Essential executive function skills from everyday life are vital to a child's autonomy, educational growth, and to assist focus and a feeling of order: An Action Research Study.**

1. **Problem and Purpose Statement**

The problem is the organizational and attention problems gifted children experience. Organization, time management, study habits and skills, mentality, stress, sleep, and screens are the seven areas where disintegrating students exhibit skill deficiencies and unproductive practices.

The purpose of this action research project is to address the problem of executive function skills that are lacking in gifted students. To incorporate formative activities that enhance these skills involving inspiration, repetition, and focus on specifics while considering the natural impulses and needs that occur during the various stages of childhood to support a student's ability to succeed academically. This approach is modeled after the Montessori approach to Practical Life skills.

# Significance of the Problem

This study aims to address the existing research gap concerning executive functioning skills in gifted students. It will accomplish this by identifying personalized supports and interventions to enhance these skills. Executive functioning skills are essential for connecting one's knowledge with its practical application, enabling effective handling of various aspects of daily life. Implementing a program that encourages the development of practical life skills through educational activities is part of the approach. These skills are important for improving a student's ability to flourish academically and in various aspects of life. Executive functions are high cognitive skills that allow people to react to stimuli in multiple ways depending on the circumstances, postpone responses, or not respond at all. These routes encourage goal-oriented behavior planning. Executive function develops gradually throughout childhood, with some emerging as early as seven months. Children at four or five years old show a large boost in their ability to block extraneous information, retain and manage knowledge, and switch between activities. These skills and abilities develop and mature until individuals reach their mid-20s. These skills are also essential for learning, and this idea seeks to present and illustrate their significance in everyday life. Improving early childhood executive function skills may help children control their impulses and make decisions that promote goal accomplishment. Without strong Executive function skills, students may begin school at a disadvantage that worsens with time. Studying these skills and treatments may enhance educational practices and student experience by including mindfulness and social skill programs. Strong executive function skills (cognitive flexibility, inhibitory control, and working memory) are critical for academic performance and relationships. Executive function skill development happens fast between the ages of three and six. Therefore, it is critical to group treatments and methods by age to better understand what works best with various age groups and student demographics (McCatharn, 2021).

# Research Questions

RQ1: How does training with an educational life executive function skills curriculum (intervention) affect the readiness to succeed of students in a program for gifted students in Youngstown, Ohio?

RQ2: How will this study utilize an action research approach, including a practical intervention of an executive function skills curriculum to develop practical life skills for education and compare self-reported awareness before and after the intervention?

# Professional Relevance

As a school administrator for gifted education, the awareness that students have become less motivated and are not taking autonomous initiative in their work is increasingly evident. There are advantages of intrinsic instructional goals for teachers who desire to help students become autonomous and intrinsically motivated.

Executive function abilities serve as a crucial link between one's knowledge and the practical application of that knowledge to handle many aspects of everyday life effectively. These skills include setting objectives, devising strategies, and adjusting plans in response to obstacles, ultimately leading to success in both academic and personal spheres.

Healthy executive function abilities enable students to cultivate regular study and work habits, diminish distractibility, regulate impulses, and engage in acts advantageous to their current and future well-being (Arar, 2022).

Executive function skills are crucial for developing self-management abilities, resilience, and self-improvement. However, the explicit and systematic instruction of Executive Function skills is not universally provided to all learners. Proficiency in executive functioning results in enhanced achievement in academics, improved interpersonal connections, and crucially, facilitates the personal development of students, consequently promoting heightened self-assurance and self-regulation (2022).

Academic and personal success in school relies on students' ability to autonomously develop strategies for completing projects and meeting deadlines, necessitating a high level of competency in executive functioning. By engaging in deliberate practice, executive function skills enable students to overcome the disparity between their abilities and difficulties, teaching them to embrace assistance to become self-reliant. Structured instruction and introspection may enhance executive function abilities and can be mastered through practice. Executive function skills enhance cognitive abilities, equipping students with mental strategies and efficient methods to maximize their learning. This empowers individuals to recognize their potential for personal growth and excel in academically and throughout everyday practical life.

**References**

Arar, L. S. A. (2022). *Validation tool to evaluate executive functions in a geometric*

*context* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Haifa (Israel)).

McCatharn, J. (2021). *Interventions targeting the executive function skills of young*

*children* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park).