2-15-2024

Elementary Teacher Perspectives Regarding Leadership Practices that Supported Creation of a Dual Language Public School

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
2024

Abstract

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MA, Heritage University, 2005

BA, Central Washington University, 2003

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Administrative Leadership for Teaching and Learning

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April 2024

Abstract

An increase in the enrollment of elementary school students who do not speak English as their first language has led to initiatives to provide effective instruction for these students which require effective leadership. The problem is that leadership practices have been unsuccessful in supporting dual language elementary school teachers, and minimal research has explored teachers' perspectives of leadership in this area. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore perspectives of rural public school teachers regarding leadership practices they found effective and ineffective in creation of a new dual language elementary school. Eleven participants answered 10 semistructured interview questions involving this topic. Fullan's theory of educational change was the conceptual framework, and data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Results were that lack of communication and collaboration among administrators can lead to challenges for teachers, and insufficient professional development can negatively affect implementation of a dual language initiative. Effective programs and support from leaders can help teachers adapt to change and manage their workload. It is recommended to replicate the study in various states and regions throughout the United States, investigate experiences of principals, conduct a follow up study with parents, and replicate the study with another language group. Effective communication and professional development are crucial for dual language program success, as dual language programs have the potential to promote bilingualism and multiculturalism, leading to positive social change.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my children Juanito, Faith, and Angel (who live in heaven) and especially to my daughter Nevaeh Ozuna, who has been a source of strength and motivation to never give up. You demonstrated remarkable understanding during times when I needed to focus on my schoolwork. Your patience, love, and understanding have been a source of inspiration. I appreciate your resilience and the moments of joy you brought into my life, even during the most challenging times. I am truly blessed to have you by my side each and every day. You will never know how you saved me; you are my reason for living.

To the strongest person I know, my mother. Mom, I could not have completed this without your guidance, patience, support with mija (Nevaeh) when I needed to read or write and especially your never ending push to get this done. We did it! Thank you, mom, for your words of encouragement and for always believing in me.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my genuine appreciation to the following individuals who played significant roles in the completion of my doctoral dissertation:

I extend my sincere appreciation to my dissertation committee, including Dr. Patricia Anderson and Dr. Johnson, for their genuine support, invaluable guidance, and scholarly insights throughout the research process. Their dedication and encouragement have been key in shaping the trajectory of my doctoral journey.

Para mis padres, Salvador y Ludi Gonzalez, y mi hermana y hermanos, Nelly, Junior and Noe, el constante apoyo y confianza en mis habilidades me dio la determinación de realizar y completar mi doctorado. Su apoyo ha sido una fuente de fortaleza y estoy agradecida por el empujo de no parar.

I would like to express gratitude to my friends and colleagues who provided words of encouragement, insightful discussions, and a supportive network. Your friendship enriched my academic experience and made the journey more meaningful.

To the mentors and peers who shared their expertise and experiences, thank you for the enriching conversations, collaborative efforts, and the sense of community that made this academic endeavor more fulfilling.

Completing this doctoral dissertation was a collective effort, and I am deeply grateful to everyone who contributed to this milestone in my academic and personal growth.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The topic of this study was leadership practices that supported the successful creation of a dual language public elementary school in which all instruction is conducted in English and Spanish and evenly divided between the two languages. This study needed to be conducted because implementation of dual language programs is part of a recent mandate for public school districts across the study state; understanding leadership practices that were effective in creating such a program will be helpful to districts as they meet this mandate. Educational support is mandated by federal law (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020). This chapter presents information regarding dual language instruction, the study's problem and purpose as well as research questions, and conceptual framework that informed this study. Also presented in this chapter are a description of how the study was conducted and assumptions and limitations that affected study results.

Background

Over the past several years, English Learners (EL) enrollment has increased across the western U.S. A dual language program in which all instruction is conducted simultaneously in English and Spanish in a classroom with native English and native Spanish speakers, was implemented as an adjunct program in two schools in the study district to support EL students. In 2019, with rising numbers of EL students and increased demand for the dual language program, district administrators decided to move the program to a single newly constructed elementary school and fund this program through a K-3 class reduction grant. Native English and Spanish-speaking students and their

teachers from the two existing adjunct programs transferred voluntarily into the full dual language school, creating an entire elementary school using the dual language format. By the start of the 2022-2023 school year, this school enrolled 591students.

In the state in which this elementary school is located, the superintendent of public instruction introduced an initiative named Dual Language for All with a goal that by 2030 all districts will offer a basic education dual language program to all families as an option for becoming bilingual and biliterate. A school district in this state and near to the district in which the dual language elementary school was created also has a high EL population and is planning to create its own dual language elementary school. An exploration of leadership challenges and successes that teachers experienced during the creation of the example elementary school would be helpful in the development of a dual language school in the study district.

According to Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction in the study state, there is a need for dual language programs across the U.S., as school populations become more diverse and include a wide range of languages and cultures. According to Lee and Louis (2019), school culture is the antecedent that is underlying academic success of students. Overall wellbeing and academic success for all students is largely due to a positive school climate (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2018). Positive relationships in a new school's culture between students, students and teachers, and teachers themselves, are fundamental to the success of schools and students' academic success (Guetterman & Mitchell, 2016). According to Broadley et al. (2019), combining any two school cultures brings organizational challenges; these challenges may be

exacerbated when the two cultures differ in terms of their languages and traditions. Creation of a positive school culture in any setting depends on the influence of principals and communication between all stakeholders (Shafer, 2018). Perspectives of elementary teachers who experienced school leadership during the successful creation of a new dual language program were the focus of this study.

Problem Statement

The problem that was the focus of this study is that leadership practices have been unsuccessful in terms of supporting dual language elementary school teachers, and minimal research has explored teachers' perspectives of leadership in this area. Due to the increasing number of EL students enrolled in public elementary schools and as a way to support students in becoming bilingual and biliterate, dual language programs have been found to be the most effective state-approved EL program in the study state. Creation of such a program has been complicated by the need to build community support to bridge cultures of constituent students, families, and educators (Hur et al., 2020). Such cultural bridging requires trained leadership on the part of organizational administrators, creating an enriched model of bilingual education (DeMatthews et al., 2021). Little research has been conducted on the creation of dual language elementary schools or on leadership strategies that are necessary to integrate students and teachers into a cohesive community. According to DeMatthews et al. (2021), there has been a need for more scholarship regarding administrative leadership in dual language whole school programs. This suggests that a gap in practice existed involving administrative

leadership, in that skills that are needed in to create a dual language elementary school were not yet known.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore perspectives of rural public school teachers regarding leadership practices they found effective in the successful creation of a new dual language elementary school. Rural schools face unique challenges that set them apart from urban schools (Taquette & Borges de Matta Souza, 2022). To address these challenges effectively, school leaders require suitable leadership knowledge and skills. The school principal is a critical figure in K-12 education, and effective school leadership is particularly important in the context of rural schools with their unique challenges and traits (Bush, 2022). For school leaders to successfully implement and sustain dual language schools, they must be able to negotiate and resist top-down policies and external pressures promoting English-only instruction (Bernstein et al., 2021).

With increasing diversity in terms of public school enrollment in the U.S. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023), two-way dual language immersion schools can create a natural opportunity for integration. Nevertheless, the way in which such schools are structured to facilitate integration among racially and linguistically diverse students who are learning in the same classroom has received less attention than other aspects of programs. School leaders, particularly principals, are extremely influential in terms of shaping school language policies and the overall quality of schooling that emergent bilinguals receive (MacLeod, 2020).

According to a national sample of schools, school leadership is the most important factor that contributes to student learning (Bush, 2021). Effective school leaders often work within a network of other principals (Barnett et al., 2013). School leaders play a crucial role in the success of dual language programs as they have the power to either support or undermine bilingual education efforts or even dismantle them (DeMatthews et al., 2019). Effective dual language school leaders are knowledgeable about bilingualism and biliteracy and about their school's emergent bilingual population. They set a clear vision for the success of all students and recognize the critical importance of close school-parent-community partnerships (García et al., 2010). Effective leaders also focus on the power of distributed leadership with social justice as a central goal. Effective leadership in dual language programs is distributed: it is not concentrated on only one individual but includes teams of administrators, instructional staff, parents, and families impacting decisions that value bilingualism and multicultural perspective (García et al., 2010).

The phenomenon of interest in this study was perspectives of teachers who were part of the creation of a dual language elementary school in the study state regarding leadership practices they found effective in creating such a program. I employed a basic qualitative design to collect data from 11 rural public school teachers to identify leadership practices that were effective in the creation of a new dual-language elementary school. School leaders who exhibited strong leadership abilities, such as building relationships with staff, students, and parents, were more likely to successfully create a dual language school program (Bernstein et al., 2021).

Effective school leadership is essential for the success of dual language schools, especially in the context of rural schools. School leaders must be knowledgeable, have a clear vision, and focus on distributed leadership with social justice as a central goal to support bilingualism and multicultural perspectives. They must be able to negotiate and resist top-down policies and external pressures promoting English-only instruction. By exhibiting strong leadership abilities, such as building relationships with staff, students, and parents, school leaders can successfully create a dual language immersion program.

Research Questions

The study was intended to understand better perspectives of teachers who were part of the creation of a dual language elementary school in the study state regarding leadership practices they found effective in creating such a program. I addressed participants' perceptions, opinions, and experiences regarding the topic to provide valuable insights about best practices for implementing a dual language program in an elementary school setting. Two research questions (RQs) guided this study:

RQ1: How did teachers who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school describe leadership practices they found effective in terms of creating such a program?

RQ2: How did teachers who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school describe leadership practices they found ineffective in terms of creating such a program?

Conceptual Framework for the Study

The work of Fullan on educational change was used for this study. Fullan (2001) recognized the more complex a society got, the stronger leadership must become. According to Fullan (2006), six core principles underpin administrative actions and attitudes that enable successful change, and those are showing appreciation of employees, being explicit about the purpose of the proposed change, building capacity for change, supporting the learning needed to accomplish the change, being transparent about issues and decisions, and being willing to modify systems to meet the change. These principles are as follows: appreciation of employees, so that administrators explicitly acknowledge and value their employees' contributions and create an environment that fosters their growth and development, communication of purpose, including explicit statement of the purpose and goals of the proposed change and how the change aligns with the organization's vision and mission, capacity building, in which administrators provide necessary resources and support to build the capacity of employees to successfully implement the change, learning support, as demonstrated by providing opportunities for learning and training that enable employees to acquire knowledge and skills that are needed to accomplish the change, demonstration of transparency about their decision-making process and communication of issues and decisions related to the change in a clear and open manner, and support for collaborative efforts through encouragement of employee teamwork and group problem-solving to leverage collective strengths and capabilities to accomplish the change. These principles are crucial for successful change

management (Fullan, 2006). By following these principles, organizations can create a culture of change that is conducive to growth and innovation.

A crucial aspect of establishing collaborative structures is reculturing, which involves reflecting on existing norms, values, skills, relationships, and incentives of working together while setting higher expectation for future (Fullan, 1998). According to Fullan (2006), a transformative system change can be achieved in schools when they learn from each other and create a collaborative culture that is focused on continuous improvement. Furthermore, Fullan (2006) emphasized that capacity building is the most crucial factor in change theory, and it requires time because change is systematic and cannot be achieved through a quick fix. Fullan's ideas on processes and mindsets that were needed to implement educational change were found to be relevant in this study, which involved examining implementation of a two-way dual language program in an elementary school.

Nature of the Study

This was a basic qualitative study which involved using interviews. According to Caelli et al. (2003), a basic qualitative study is used to explore a phenomenon from the point of view of persons who know the phenomenon best. The phenomenon under consideration in this study was perspectives of teachers who were part of the creation of a dual language elementary school in the study state regarding leadership practices they found effective in creating such a program. This phenomenon could not be studied through observation because teachers' perspectives are not observable, so that method of implementing a basic qualitative study was rejected. A survey could have provided

perspectives from a greater number of participants than was feasible in an interview-based study, but a survey would not have measured teachers' perspectives of leadership practices they found effective but rather level of agreement with researcher-devised hypotheses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In-depth interviews with open-ended questions were used to explore teachers' perspectives.

Interviews were conducted with 11 teachers who worked at the target school when the school-wide dual language program was created in 2019. Some of these teachers still worked at the school and some had moved on. Interviews were transcribed, and transcriptions were analyzed using thematic coding.

Definitions

Bilingual Program: A program that provides language support to non-English proficient students. Based on students' needs, support can focus on speaking, listening, reading, or writing (Avni & Menken, 2019).

Dual language: Any program that promotes biliteracy, bilingualism, and sociocultural competency though literacy and content instruction in two languages (Howard et al., 2018).

Two-way dual language: A two-way dual language program which involves inviting native English-speaking students to join their native Spanish-speaking peers in an integrated bilingual classroom (Thomas & Collier, 2020).

English learners (EL): ELs are students who are learning English and whose native language is a language other than English (de Jong et al., 2019).

Qualitative method: A qualitative method is used in research to obtain data through non-numerical methods (Gregory, 2020). In this case, data were gathered using interviews and open-ended questions .

Assumptions

In conducting interview-based studies, it is important to assume that participants are truthful and complete in terms of what they share. This is because such studies rely heavily on veracity of informants (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). In the case of this study, I assumed participants were honest with their responses regarding perspectives of rural public school teachers and leadership practices they found effective in terms of successful creation of a new dual-language elementary school. Furthermore, it was also assumed that being interviewed would help evoke memories of experiences of their treatment a rural public school teachers who were in the classroom during this period of educational change, and they reflected on their experiences regarding leadership practices they found effective in terms of successful creation of a new dual language elementary school. To ensure participants were relevant to the research setting, purposeful sampling was conducted. This means only critical participants from the specific research setting were selected to participate. It was also assumed that participants were sincerely interested in participating and did not have any ulterior motives. It is crucial to trust the honesty of participants and assume they provide accurate and complete information. This guarantees a reliable study with valid results.

Scope and Delimitations

This study included the perspectives of 11 elementary school teachers who worked at the target school during the time when this new dual language elementary school was created and experienced leadership practices that were intended to successfully launch the dual language initiative in a whole-school context. Participants were K-5 teachers who worked at the new dual language school when it was created. I included teachers of general education classrooms as well as teachers of special topics, such as music and art, and teachers of special populations, such as gifted and special needs students. Teachers who worked at the target school at the time but had since moved on to other work also were included. Excluded from this study were teachers at the target school of children younger than kindergarten, worked in schools other than the new dual language school, or joined that school during years following its beginning. These delimitations and exclusions may affect transferability, because other schools and schools in other districts as well as schools that enroll other students than elementary school students or serve different language groups than English and Spanish may have different experiences than what participants in this study described.

Limitations

A limitation of this study was that it was conducted during or following the COVID-19 pandemic (see Alvarez et al., 2023), which may have affected implementation of the dual language program in its first years as well as teachers' remembrances of their teaching at that time. Stresses and instructional changes caused by the pandemic may

have affected how the program was implemented and leadership administrators were able to provide.

A second limitation was the possibility of researcher bias. As a teacher in the study state working in a district near the target school, I have ideas regarding validity of dual language programs, experiences with teaching EL students, and beliefs about administrator leadership practices that support teachers and students. To counteract bias during this study and analysis of data, I kept a journal as a depository of my thoughts and questions.

Significance

This research contributes to literature about the creation of a dual language elementary school and addressed the gap in practice regarding administrator leadership practices that are effective in terms of successful creation of a new dual language elementary school. This may assist other building principals and administrators in terms of leading their school communities in dual language initiatives and may result in more effective schools and greater student success.

Summary

This chapter included an introduction to administrator leadership in terms of creation of a dual language elementary school in one district in the western U.S. The problem is that leadership practices have been unsuccessful in terms of supporting dual language elementary school teachers, and minimal research has explored teachers' perspectives of leadership in this area. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore perspectives of rural public school teachers regarding leadership practices they

found effective in terms of successful creation of a new dual language elementary school. Two research questions were used to address administrator practices teachers found effective as well as those they found less effective during development of the new dual language school. Data were collected through individual interviews with teachers of the target school at the time of dual language program implementation and analyzed for emergent themes. This study may inspire positive social change in that it describes administrator practices that support teachers and students working together across language differences and may lead to effective instruction and student success.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The problem that was the focus of this study is that leadership practices have been unsuccessful in terms of supporting dual language elementary school teachers, and minimal research has involved teachers' perspectives of leadership in this area. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore perspectives of rural public school teachers regarding leadership practices they found effective in the successful creation of a new dual language elementary school. In this chapter, I describe how I searched for relevant literature on this topic and an in-depth discussion of the study's conceptual framework. I also present a review of current literature that is relevant to administrative leadership in terms of creating a new dual language program in an elementary school setting.

Literature Search Strategy

The following search engines were used: EBSCOHost, Academic Search Primer and Education Search Primer, Scholar Works, Dissertations and Theses at Walden University, ProQuest Dissertations, Google Search, and Google Scholar. I used the following search terms: *administration in education*, *bilingual programs*, *bilingualism*, *collaborative leadership*, *dual language*, *dual language structures*, *elementary education*, *elementary school*, *English learning in elementary schools*, *English learners*, *English language learners*, *leadership characteristic*, *multilingual*, *multilingualism*, *multilingual learners*, *school administration*, *school principals*, *second language learners*, *student achievement*, *student performance*, *sustainability*, *teacher perceptions*, and *teacher perspectives on leadership*.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was Fullan's educational change theory. Fullan (2008) proposed effective leadership includes knowing when to be decisive in situations that need action and when to listen in times of complexity. Fullan proposed six essential elements, which he called secrets, to enable organizations to thrive in terms of educational change: demonstrating appreciation of employees (love), connecting peers with the purpose of the proposed change, building capacity for change, supporting the learning that is needed to accomplish the work, being transparent about issues and decisions, and being willing to modify systems to meet the change (Fullan, 2008). Fullan (2001) described these leadership skills as integrated components that are needed to lead in a changing world and improve effectiveness of organizational change.

Demonstrating concern regarding what matters to all stakeholders builds feelings among constituent groups involving being a part of something larger and of agents of change (Fullan, 2008). Leaders who cultivate a supportive relationship with all stakeholders create an atmosphere of mutual respect which enables work toward shared goals, shared knowledge, problem-solving strategies, and a sense of urgency in terms of student success (Fullan, 2001). According to Carlyon and Branson (2018), resistance to change in any organization, including schools, is ever and a challenge for leaders. As an essential element of change, leaders must cultivate positive relationships with diverse people and those whose ideas are different from their own (Fullan, 2001). Demonstrating enthusiasm and care inspires people to achieve and want to deliver desired results (Fullan, 2001).

The second secret for educational change is to connect peers with purpose while continuously learning together and reevaluating actions for student success (Fullan, 2008). Stakeholders need to see leaders as active participants who learn new ideas, share knowledge with others, and guide with moral purpose while proactively communicating a clear common direction (Fullan, 2001). Leader interactions with colleagues must be purposeful and effective while working to create a sustainable positive culture in educational systems (Fullan, 2008). Stakeholders have the desire to belong and be part of the change process for student success. According to Fullan (2001), focus can easily shift in the wrong direction if leaders do not positively guide constituents toward a shared purpose.

Capacity building is the third secret for educational change. According to Fullan (2008), building capacity for change includes avoiding a judgmental posture, which creates negative energy. In organizations in which the leader is viewed as judgmental, stakeholders may take even benign comments as criticism and reduce their engagement, but when leaders use encouragement and are open to new ideas, participants tend to be positively motivated when working on tasks together (Fullan, 2008). Capacity for change is built on a culture of supportive leadership through positive coaching, leveraging of collective strengths, and approaching tasks using a team mindset (Fullan, 2008).

Carlyon and Branson (2018) referred to resistance to change as a struggle with loss. Change means that an individual loses what was once comfortable and now will need to learn or do something different with questionable support and guidance from others (Carlyon & Branson, 2018). Working together with one another while growing a

positive mindset requires a willingness to change habits in service of mutual

responsibility as a team to enact a change (Fullan, 2008). Shared problem solving is

necessary to move forward as a system comprised of learners (Fullan, 2008). Leaders

should participate as learners to move staff through changes (Fullan, 2001). This culture

of supporting one another empowers stakeholders to deal with complex change and

builds capacity within educational settings (Fullan, 2001).

Transparency is the fifth secret of educational change, in which issues, intentions,

challenges, and perspectives must be explicitly described and not hidden from view

(Fullan, 2008). It is important to be clear on what is being measured so that educational

teams can gather data, identify best practices, apply instructions, and make adjustments

with accountability to meet student educational outcomes (Fullan, 2008). If students'

outcomes are not apparent it is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of a change

(Fullan, 2008). If difficulties teachers might encounter are trivialized, or leaders'

decisions and motives are disguised, then the organization lacks trust, which undermines

the sense of shared purpose and positivity (Fullan, 2001).

Systems learn, which is the essential element of all six secrets of change (Fullan,

2008). Educational change is bigger than an individual leader, so success or failure of a

change initiative results from the system as a whole, of which the leader is just one part.

Collins and Allender (2013) reinforced the need of educational leaders to grow

knowledge and systemic capacity for positive change through humble guidance and

support. Cultivating a sense of compassion for others and supporting each other in

building strengths that are necessary to grow together as an organization is the main goal

of effective change leaders (Fullan, 2001). All six secrets of change must work in concert to achieve positive results over time (Fullan, 2008).

Fullan's change theory formed the conceptual framework for this study and the six secrets shaped the study's interview questions (see Appendix). The extent to which Fullan's six secrets were employed by administrators in their implementation of a school-wide change were explored using the perspectives of rural public school teachers who experienced this change. The leadership practices they found effective in the successful creation of a new dual language elementary school, described in the Results, may provide guidance to other schools considering a similar change.

Literature Related to Key Concepts and Variables

ELs in Elementary Schools

United States has become linguistically diverse in that 21.7 % of individuals speak a language other than English (U. S. Census Bureau, 2022). Amidst increasingly diverse demographics, national law expects equitable educational access for all (Lucido, 2019). According to Goldenberg (2020), English Learners (ELs) face the challenge of learning to read in a new language in which they are simultaneously learning to understand. ELs are students who are learning English and whose native language is a language other than English (Hur et al., 2020). ELs struggle in trying to become proficient in English while at the same time learning how to read, write and grow as a reader in a new language (Goldenberg, 2020). In fact, children from diverse families often enter the educational system not knowing how to speak, read, write, nor understand English, yet education is a critical part of growth and development. According to a state

report card issued by the superintendent of public instruction in the state that is the focus of the study, in 2021 only 61,736 ELs out of 136,178 were able to take the state English language assessment and of these only 7,161 (11%) ELs achieved a passing score. This indicated that 89% of ELs who took the test in the study state did not have success in meeting state standard in reading.

According to district reports, 31% of ELs in the district that is the focus of the study speak Spanish as their first language and 69% of students speak English as their first language. The number of ELs enrolled in the district showed a slight increase since 2021 from 30% to 31%. This trend of increasing language diversity in public school districts is found across the United States (Hur et al., 2020). Due to this increase, the study state board of education pursued unique opportunities to assist struggling schools in making a positive impact on student learning (Norville, 2020). According to Reykdal (2023), language diversity is a key issue in elementary education that affects academic progress and achievement of assessment goals.

Lack of English language proficiency affects elementary school ELs in several ways. As indicated previously, ELs struggle to learn to read English, which results in falling further behind academically (Weyer & Casares, 2019). ELs achieve at a level 27% lower on national norm-referenced literacy assessments in fourth grade compared to the achievement level of their English -speaking peers (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2022). In fact, children from diverse families often enter the educational system not knowing how to speak, read, write nor understand English yet education is a critical part of growth and development (Shanahan & Echevarria, 2019). The use of educational

options that support ELs, when possible, provides a high-quality academic learning as well as giving students choice to choose their language of discourse (Wagner, 2021).

EL Programs

According to Howard et al. (2018), EL programs can be compared by the amount of English language instruction provided to students throughout the day. English mainstream denotes programs conducted entirely in English, with perhaps some pull-out support for non-English speakers (Howard et al., 2018). Dual language (DL) programs offer some instruction in a second language in addition to English, with the proportion of each language ranging from half the day in each of the two languages (English and a second language) to 90% in the second language and only 10% in English (Howard et al., 2018). Such DL programs are considered two-way, in that students in classrooms have different home languages, including some with a home language of English, and instruction is conducted in two languages, English and an alternative, so all students learn an alternative language to their home language (Thomas & Collier, 2017). Other EL programs are one-way, in that all students in a classroom speak the same language, either English or an alternative language, and instruction is conducted primarily or exclusively in the language spoken by students in the class (de Jong et al., 2019). A core value in a DL program is the importance of building social cultural competency, through increased academic attainment, biliteracy, and bilingualism (Palmer et al., 2019). According to Howard et al. (2018), DL programs are considered an exercise in additive bilingualism, where all students acquire a second language while having continued access to their home language.

The district that is the focus of this study implemented a two-way DL program, with student classroom populations of approximately equal numbers of English speakers and Spanish-speaking ELs, and with instruction in both languages during the day. According to district reports, literacy, social studies, and mathematics are taught in Spanish to all students in grades K-2 and science is taught in English. This program follows a 90:10 model (Spanish to English) based on language allocation. District reports note that in grades 3 through 5, all students are taught in a 50:50 DL program, so that literacy and mathematics are taught in English and science and social studies are taught in Spanish.

A different model is a one-way DL program where a homogeneous group of students are placed in classrooms based on their home language (de Jong et al., 2019). In a neighboring district to this study's focus district, K-2 students whose dominant language is Spanish are placed in majority Spanish-only instruction classrooms and students whose home language is English are placed in English-only instruction classroom, according to district reports. In this district's program, K-2 ELs are taught reading, writing, and science in their home language, of Spanish, and are taught mathematics in English. K-2 English-speaking students are taught all subjects in English. In grades K-2 in this neighboring district, the two groups of students, English-speakers and Spanish-speakers, are separated for all content-area instruction, including mathematics and specialist subjects like art. Students do mix in with one another at recess. Starting in Grade 3, students in the district are taught using a sheltered English immersion program in which students of both language groups are taught in the same

English-only classrooms; ELs receive instruction in all content areas only in English with embedded language development strategies to be taught by their classroom teacher.

Across the United States, most districts that have an EL program follow a one-way model. According to Center for Applied Linguistics [CAL] (CAL, 2020), self-reports indicated that there are one-way EL programs in 69 public-school districts nationwide and two-way EL programs in 47 districts. According to the National Center for Education Statistics [NCES] (NCES, 2023), in the 2015-2016 school year, the year for which there are most recent data, there were over 18,000 public school districts in the United States. Many of these may not have an EL population sufficient to require an EL program, but the proportion of two-way to one-way EL programs indicated by CAL (2020) from self-reports of only 116 districts nationwide only hints at an extent of the two program models. That being said, in some parts of the United States, dual language programs and other efforts to meet students' culturally diverse needs are against the law and this has added its own stress on children and educators (Gomez & Cisneros, 2020).

Challenges and Benefits of Dual Language Programs

DL programs offer special benefits to students, teachers, and administrators. For example, ELs who carry a greater language and literacy gap are given instruction in both languages to support on the strengths they have versus focusing on what students can not accomplish (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2020). Ethnic minority children are cultivating experience with other diverse populations while working to understand one another (Szeto et al., 2019). While ELs are learning a new language, they are attaining their native language which in turn supports becoming bilingual and biliterate (Freeman et al.,

2005). Teachers and administrators have flexibility to adapt materials to meet the language needs of students while fostering cultural differences as multicultural inclusiveness (Szeto et al., 2019).

At the same time, DL programs offer challenges to children, administrators, and teachers. For example, third grade students who transition to an all-English classroom following a one-way experience in grades K-2, and other ELs newly registered into third through fifth grade classrooms with little prior instruction in English, face challenges academically. EL students may struggle to pass state assessments in third grade, which typically are administered only in English (Adler-Greene, 2019). Gonzales and Tejero Hughes (2021) found that native language instruction such as that offered in a one-way DL program can transfer to second language as students become academically proficient in content knowledge within their first language. Gonzales and Tejero Hughes warned, however, that academic gaps develop early, and schools must provide intervention for student success when ELs taught in one-way classrooms transition at third grade into classrooms taught all in English. EL students not only are subjected to injustices within school communities when dealing with assessments in a language other than their own, they tend to be taught by educators that focus on what these students cannot accomplish instead of focusing on what they can (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2020). According to DeMatthews and Izquierdo (2020), EL students enter schools with educational gaps and struggle academically compared to that of their English speaking peers and with that EL students need social and emotional supports, because of their internalized feelings of self-doubt, failure, and low self-esteem about education.

Teachers also feel challenges in working in a dual language classroom. For example, DeMatthews and Izquierdo (2020) found that dual language teachers have a larger workload compared to that of their general education partners. According to DeMatthews and Izquierdo, dual language teachers must conduct instruction in two languages and many times must create their own curriculum due to the lack of curriculum in the targeted language. Lachance et al. (2019) agreed that teachers not only may instruct in two languages, but they also must engage students in communicating in two languages while using appropriate language patterns. In addition, dual language teachers may not feel confident in providing high quality EL instructional strategies and may feel challenged with time management (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2020). Teachers receive high numbers of linguistic and culturally diverse learners with intent to increase academic progress in multiple academic areas (Lachance, 2017). When DL students fail, some teachers blame themselves which builds a sense of undo stress (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2020). Another challenge teachers have encountered is a lack of parent engagement and involvement during the academic support of students (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2020).

Challenges for administrators working within a dual language school start with creating a culturally responsive school in support of addressing educational inequities where receiving buy in from all stakeholders in working towards common beliefs, values, and commitments in serving minorized students (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2020). According to DeMatthews and Izquierdo (2020), administrators are immersed in leading a building in which ELs are subjected to societal and educational discriminations and are

challenged with funding to provide the social emotional support needed for ELs. Szeto et al. (2019) shared that changing policies in districts to meet diverse student population can be a challenge. Due to lack of buy in from stakeholders, often administrators deal with sabotage in which some teachers discourage families into the DL programs which then may lead to lack of parent involvement or program understanding (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2020). Administrators must pursue social justice to promote social inclusivity, yet challenges continue, due to differences in demographic backgrounds which create obstacles to administrator leadership practices (Szeto et al., 2019). Resistance to the dual language program by teachers leads to limited participation or collaboration with other colleagues which in turn affects students' outcomes (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2020).

Administrator Practices to Support Educational Change

Societal changes, such as the increase in non-English speakers in public schools, increases pressure on educational administrators to make innovative decisions regarding instructional improvement for all students (Portela & Pino Juste, 2020). Educational decision-making in the United States revolves around maximizing student achievement on standardized assessments (Fullan, 2008) so the need among school administrators to increase the English-language abilities of ELs share importance with the need to serve these students themselves. As Palumbo and Manna (2019) pointed out, schools must continuously alter their practices and structures to meet the ever-changing institutional and social environment. Mestry (2017) stated administrators seek opportunities to foster personal professional development as ways to increase their educational knowledge and readiness to lead. School administrators, however, must manage different constituencies

in enacting educational change. Carlyon and Branson (2018) noted that administrators

must pay attention to those charged with producing change just as much as they attend to

dictating that the change happen.

A distributive leadership style can be best in implementing educational change

(Shaked & Schechter, 2019). According to Torres (2019), a distributive leadership style

is characterized as a team of educators working collaboratively to create schoolwide

positive change. In contrast, a unitary leadership style, based on top-down directives from

a single principal, can be risky, harming the culture of the school and ultimately costing

the job of the decision maker (Shaked & Schechter, 2019). Active engagement of

administrators cultivates collaboration and buy-in and has the power to move initiatives

forward as a collective team (Kalkan et al., 2020).

Effective leadership has a potential to improve the quality of multiple sectors in a

workplace (Kalkan et al., 2020), which can translate to the entire culture of the school

overall. As Palumbo and Manna (2019) pointed out, administrators involved in the

creation of a new educational structure or change to the environment must manage

cultural concerns and support an open climate where all opinions are welcomed.

Administrators must take the lead in the creation of the school culture (Knecht, 2019).

Administrators do this by actively investing in the views of others while cultivating

collaboration and communication in decision-making (Meador, 2020). According to

Knecht (2019), it is crucial for an administrator to establish an equitable school

atmosphere for all.

Such an atmosphere is built on trust (Weinstein et al., 2018). Trust among personnel in organizations creates a positive school culture and climate whereas a lower level of trust fuels negative perceptions (Canli & Demirtas, 2018). Building trust happens gradually through everyday interactions and connects school stakeholders together (Weinstein et al., 2018). This idea of trust in the workplace is a crucial part of workplaces worldwide and is often used as a measure of organizational success (Maiolo & Zuffo, 2018). Bilgin and Kiral (2019) found that mutual trust and friendships between administrators and educators resulted in a favorable school culture. These friendships allow administrators to be able to talk about a wide range of matters, including school related issues. Such as instruction and curriculum implementation, which contributes to the building of positive culture (Bilgin & Kiral, 2019).

Cardellino and Woolner (2020) stated it is important to have whole building buy-in on educational program initiatives, indicating that sharing common goals makes it easier to produce a functional learning environment. In the context of integrating ELs into the educational system, according to Billy and Garriguez (2019), being aware of the purpose of dual language programs, whether the model is 90:10, 50:50, or one-way or two-way, is one way an administrator can demonstrate support for teachers with instructional decisions. Given that many obstacles arise in an educational setting, administrators must be intentional in supporting linguistically and culturally diverse populations within the school, in addition to supporting teachers (Bagwell, 2019). The multiple components of an educational system must be coordinated and led by a trusted

and collaborative administrator if the system is to be successful in educating EL students (Palumbo & Manna, 2019).

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter included an introduction to the research context of the study, which included a statement of the local problem, literature search strategies with definitions of terms, the conceptual framework, and a review of literature. The problem that was the focus of this study is that leadership practices have been unsuccessful in terms of supporting dual language elementary school teachers, and minimal previous research had explored teachers' perspectives of leadership in this area. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore perspectives of rural public school teachers regarding leadership practices they found effective in terms of successful creation of a new dual language elementary school. Fullan's change theory was the conceptual framework for this study. A review of literature revealed organizing an elementary school to accommodate ELs is complex and affects various constituencies differently, suggesting how building administrators navigate these issues determines the culture of the school and success of their teachers and students. In Chapter 3, I describe the methodology.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore teacher perspectives of leadership practices with supporting dual language elementary schools. In this chapter, I describe the research design I employed in conducting this study, my role as the researcher, and the study's method and procedures. I describe how issues of trustworthiness and ethics were addressed.

Research Design and Rationale

This basic qualitative study was guided by two RQs:

RQ1: How do teachers, who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school describe leadership practices they found effective in terms of creating such a program?

RQ2: How do teachers who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school describe leadership practices they found ineffective in terms of creating such a program?

The phenomenon of interest was perspectives of teachers who were part of the creation of a dual language elementary school in the study state regarding leadership practices they found effective in terms of creating such a program. I used a basic qualitative design Caelli et al. (2003) indicated a basic qualitative design with interviews is appropriate when the purpose is to explore experiences and opinions of individuals with direct knowledge of the phenomenon under study. Other designs were considered and rejected. I considered the quantitative survey design, to solicit information from more teachers. A survey, however, would not have provided me with insights regarding lived

experiences of those teachers. Similarly, I considered conducting a document analysis, which involves addressing policies and communications involving the educational change under study, but this also would not have led to information regarding personal experiences of teachers who were part of this change. Therefore, a basic qualitative design with interviews was selected for this study.

Role of the Researcher

I was the observer-participant in this study. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) described this role as focusing on information from participants (the observed) while supporting participants in providing that information. In this way, the researcher is also a participant during construction of data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I did not have experience with this topic, and so investigated and recorded experiences of those who were familiar.

At the time of this study, I was in my second year as a vice principal in an elementary school with prekindergarten through fifth grade with 96% Hispanic students, of which 41% are ELs. As someone who worked with EL students in my school, I was interested in experiences of teachers in the target school, which was in a nearby district. I brought to this study my own biases and preconceptions based on my own teaching. I guarded against interference during this study of my personal opinions by using reflexivity. I used a journal to record my thoughts and ideas as they occurred to me during interviews and data analysis as a method of keeping my biases in check. In addition, I excluded from participation interviews of anyone with whom I had a personal or professional relationship. I had no supervisory role in my school district at the time of the study.

Methodology

Participant Selection

The population under study was general education elementary school teachers who worked with EL students. I used purposeful sampling to identify interview participants. Purposeful sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling and appropriate in qualitative research, in which the objective is to determine what happened in a particular situation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), selection criteria form the purpose in purposeful sampling and determine the richness of data one can obtain from the participant sample. By engaging a sample that has deep firsthand experience with the phenomenon under consideration, the researcher increases the likelihood data will fulfill the study's purpose (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Study participants were purposefully selected to provide insights regarding successful implementation of a dual language elementary school program. Participants were certified elementary school teachers and taught in the study school during the time when the change to a schoolwide two-way dual language program was implemented. Excluded were teachers who worked at other schools, teachers who were not present at the study school during the educational change, teachers who taught in exclusive special needs classrooms, and teachers of prekindergarten students. Criteria for participation were described to prospective participants in a recruitment message and the study's consent form. I confirmed with each participant that they met study criteria during conversations at the beginning of each interview.

I contacted a colleague who worked as an administrator at the study school via email and asked them to distribute my flyer to certified teachers who worked at the study school during implementation of the educational change. This administrator was not included as an interview participant. I then used snowball sampling to add participants as first interviews were ongoing. Snowball sampling is a method of participant recruitment, especially in interview-based studies regarding local issues where informants are likely to know one another (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). As teachers responded to the flyer by contacting me, I emailed them consent forms. Volunteers who indicated consent by returning emails were included in the study.

I intended to interview 10 to 12 teachers, and 11 teachers were interviewed in total. This number of participants is typical in interview-based studies that require in-depth of information. Baker and Edwards (2012) suggested interview-based studies may include between five and 50 participants. Dworkin (2012) maintained a dissertation may be effectively conducted with as few as five participants. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested the size of the sample should be determined after data saturation so researchers can feel confident they have achieved an appropriate sample size when no new ideas surface in later interviews than were found in earlier interviews.

Instrumentation

I created a series of 10 open-ended questions to help me answer the study's research questions following a semistructured approach. Interview questions involved specific elements of effective educational change leadership, as well as additional ideas and not-yet-considered details. I asked what participants remembered about times of

educational change. Questions 2 through 7 involved Fullan's six secrets of change

leadership. Question 7 involved an overall assessment of participants' satisfaction with

the process of making the educational change. Question 9 was about what principals

could have done differently that might have made the change easier or more successful.

Question 10 was about what advice participants had for other administrators who are

contemplating a change to a two-way dual language format in their schools (see

Appendix A).

I asked a colleague who holds a doctorate in education to review the interview

questions in light of the study's purpose and its research questions. They reminded me to

be certain that every interview question is directly associated with a research question.

They also made many specific suggestions to increase the questions' clarity and

effectiveness. I made these changes. This colleague confirmed that the questions I had

did have the power to answer the research questions and fulfill the study purpose.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Recruitment

I applied for and was granted approval (06-08-23-0344512) from Walden

University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to begin my study. I started recruiting

participants by sharing my recruitment flyer with my administrative colleague at the

study school. I asked them to share the flyer with current teachers at the school who

worked there when the change to a two-way dual language school was being

implemented, and also with other teachers who worked at the school during that time but

who had since left the school. As prospective participants responded to my flyer, I

emailed them the consent form. When someone volunteered to be part of the study by replying to my email with the words, "I consent," I scheduled an interview with them at a mutually convenient day and time.

Participation and Data Collection

Interviews were conducted by telephone or Zoom, as each participant wished, and audio-recorded using a recording tool on my cell phone or the recording function of Zoom. At the conclusion of each interview, I thanked the participant and tell them that they should expect to receive by email a transcript of our conversation to review for accuracy. I used Otter.ai, an automated transcription tool, to transcribe the audio files into Word documents. I read through each transcript, correcting transcription errors, with reference to the audio as needed. When each transcript was edited, I emailed the transcript to the participant with a request that they apprise me of any corrections they wished to be made, or to confirm the accuracy of the transcript. I waited a week for a response. No participants requested any changes, so I used my edited transcripts as the data set.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis Plan

</div>

Data were collected through semistructured interviews with teachers in an elementary school under study. To begin the analysis of data, I first removed my voice from the transcripts and also removed any parts of conversation that were not part of the interview, such as comments about the weather. I then assigned each participant an identifier, such as P1, P2, and so on; the file that associated these identifiers with each participant was kept in a unique folder on my computer, not mingled with the study data.

Next, I separated each transcript into individual sentences, with each sentence on a new line and flush with the left margin of the Word file.

I created an Excel spreadsheet of three columns. Column A included participant identifiers. Column B included the transcripts. Column C was reserved for category labels. Next, I copied the entire transcript from P1 into Column B; because I had separated the transcript into individual sentences, each sentence automatically appeared on its own row in Excel. I inserted the participant identifier on each row of the P1 transcript, using Column A. In this way, the entire transcript of P1's interview appeared as separate sentences or ideas in Column B on the Excel spreadsheet, and every sentence P1 said was identified as spoken by P1 in Column A. I repeated this procedure with all the transcripts, using the same spreadsheet, with each transcript following the previous in Column B, and participant identifiers included on each row of Column A.

I then reviewed the data. According to Saldana (2021), a read-through of the entire data set is important so the researcher can familiarize themselves with the sorts of ideas participants shared, and can begin to see patterns in the data. I also used this first review to make clearer any statements that refer to my question or comments, to mask names of people and organizations, and to remove extraneous words and phrasing to improve sense. I broke up long sentences into separate thoughts, especially if more than one thought was included, so each Excel row represented an individual idea. Individual rows in Column B, corresponding to individual thoughts expressed by participants, constituted codes, determined by in vivo coding (see Saldana, 2021). As Castleberry and Nolen (2018) indicated, in vivo coding relies on participants' verbatim statements, which

are then delimited through the coding process to form unique concepts. A particular bit of data is similar to other bits based on a shared reflection of a unique concept (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

Next, I inserted in Column C single-words or short phrases that summarized the thought expressed on each row in Column B. These created categories of data, as described by Saldana (2021). As Castleberry and Nolen (2018) pointed out that in this process of grouping codes into categories, nuances in the codes emerged, leading to fine distinctions in the categories. I used the same categories multiple times, so the data could be sorted efficiently by category, but with attention to the nuances in the data. I then used Excel's sort feature to sort the data by category, and made small adjustments to the categories as needed to consolidate them and make the categories clearly distinct from one another and internally consistent. This process of axial coding (see Simmons, 2018) continued as categories, including their associated rows, were moved on the spreadsheet so similar categories were together. In this way, I created key ideas, funneling codes into categories and categories into themes. I discovered that all themes informed both research question, but represented opposite levels of leader effectiveness as reported by participants. Castleberry and Nolen (2018) recognized that thematic analysis is unique to each researcher, who makes decisions about the data, the relationships among codes and categories, and the relevance of the data to the research purpose.

Throughout this process, I was alert to the possibility of discrepant data. According to Booth et al. (2013), discrepancies in the data appear as ideas that do not fit into the patterns emerging from the data as a whole. If such discrepancies emerge during

data analysis, I was prepared to review each instance with my chair, as Booth et al. recommended for a doctoral student, to explore the possibility of new ideas that might contribute to the research. However, there were no discrepant data identified in the data.

<div align="center">**Trustworthiness**</div>

In qualitative research, trustworthiness pertains to the level of confidence one has in the authenticity of data, interpretation, and methodologies employed to ensure the quality of a study (Guba, 1981). This aspect enables researchers to interpret the merits of qualitative terms beyond the scope of quantitative research parameters (Collins et al., 2018). Trustworthiness serves as a means to demonstrate the credibility of the research while asserting the significance of the study's findings. To establish trustworthiness, researchers must demonstrate that their findings are dependable, credible, confirmable, and transferable (Guba, 1981). By doing so, they can instill confidence in the accuracy of their research results. The principles applied by both the researcher and the participant were aimed at achieving reliability, which is a crucial aspect of research. The commitment and competence of the researcher were demonstrated by ensuring that all criteria, including reliability and validity strategies, were met throughout the process (Adler, 2022).

Credibility

Credibility is a fundamental aspect of trustworthiness in qualitative research, comprising consistency between the data and the researcher's presentation of them (Adler, 2022). Enhancing credibility demands significant investment in time spent with the interviewee, in addition to requesting them to review the data and verify its accuracy

(Naeem et al., 2023). The research subjects were selected from the recruitment process and encouraged at the outset of the interview to candidly express their thoughts and share their experiences. As the researcher, I made it clear that they should speak openly without limitations or fear of any repercussions due to the nature of sharing the same profession. Open-ended interview questions were used to elicit comprehensive and detailed responses, contributing to a wealth of data. Furthermore, participants were sent a copy of their interview transcript to review for accuracy. Establishing credibility was also based on maintaining the confidentiality of participants who had agreed to participate openly and honestly in the research process (Dougherty, 2021). Credibility in this study was supported by the authenticity of the data, as confirmed by its participants.

Data triangulation also was employed to establish credibility. According to Cosgrove (2018), data triangulation involves using multiple sources or methods to support a given set of interpretations. Multiple viewpoints, representing the diverse experiences of the 11 participants, were considered from different angles to create themes and categories for the study. As described by Cosgrove (2018), numerous people and data sources can be used, and were used in this study, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the focal phenomenon.

Transferability

The concept of transferability is comparable to that of generalizability, commonly employed in quantitative studies; however, it is subject to the reader's context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintained that it is impossible to ascertain if qualitative findings can apply to another context without the input of someone with

experience in that context. Therefore, researchers must provide enough details about their study to enable readers to determine the transferability of the findings to their own circumstances.

To enhance transferability, I solicited participants in the chosen study site to provide descriptions of their perspectives of rural public school teachers regarding the leadership practices they found effective in the successful creation of a new dual-language elementary school with dual language development. This approach demonstrated that the sample selected represented the target population, as suggested by Dougherty (2021), because the participants possessed the knowledge, experience, or expertise necessary to provide relevant information concerning the topic. To reinforce transferability, I provided clear and comprehensive descriptions of my research procedures, including details about the participants and setting. Additionally, the findings were presented in a contextualized manner to enable a broad readership to comprehend the findings and appreciate their transferability.

Dependability

Dependability is a critical aspect of research that ensures the reliability of findings over time (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is similar to reliability, which is a quantitative research term. According to Golafshani (2003), dependability describes the reader's ability to trust the findings and imagine them repeating over time. To maintain dependability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) advised researchers to seek external validation of their findings and methods before publication. In this study, my dissertation committee and university research reviewer played this role, helping me achieve dependability.

To establish the study's dependability, I reviewed multiple studies with comparable settings, participants, and research questions. Throughout the research process, descriptive data analysis methods were used to provide details on the instrumentation's design and development (see Billups, 2021). The study's concept, its implementation methods, obtained data, and their evaluation, as well as processing, were described (see Smith & Hasan, 2020). A comprehensive description was provided that enabled the replication of the study to establish its dependability. The datasets and variables were shared to demonstrate the study's dependability, as described by Dougherty (2021). Dependability was further demonstrated by providing sequential descriptions of all steps, which allowed for accurate reproduction by other researchers. These components demonstrated the consistency of the data and ensured the study's dependability (see Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Confirmability

Confirmability represents the fourth pillar of trustworthiness in qualitative research and denotes the degree to which the research findings are grounded in the study's facts (Naeem, 2023). Naeem (2023) proposed that confirmability is the outcome of credibility, transferability, and dependability, and when these three elements are achieved, the research findings can be confirmed. To establish the confirmability of the study, I assert that no biases were present during the research process and that the collected data supported the study's findings. To ensure accuracy, I employed triangulation tactics and audits throughout the study to establish a valid decision-making

process. As the researcher, I played a central role in the study, and it was imperative to scrutinize my positionality and bias carefully (see Guba, 1981).

To achieve confirmability, reflexivity was used by relying on the interview questions as a guide and asking probing questions until data saturation was attained. The implications for practice and recommendations for future research were based on the results presented in the analysis of the data to support credibility. Additionally, a journal was used to reflect on my processes and ongoing assessment of the data, and to eliminate any biases that may have arisen during the data verification process. To ensure accuracy, all interview notes were thoroughly examined. Prior to participating in the interview, participants were provided with a consent form and made aware of their position, as well as the option to leave for any reason they deemed necessary.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical issues within data collection can arise anytime and have been a subject of concern among scholars and researchers for several years (Kass & Faden, 2018). Markham (2018) stated that ethical dilemmas can be encountered in any research, particularly when dealing with big data, which may compromise privacy and confidentiality. Similarly, Crouch et al. (2018) discovered that ethical issues were prevalent in studies that involved vulnerable populations, such as children, the elderly, and those with mental health conditions. In addition, Varkey (2021) highlighted that ethnical challenges can arise in any research, regardless of the methodology used or research design, emphasizing the need for clear ethnical guidelines to be established and followed by researchers.

To ensure ethical protections for participants, I submitted an application to Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for authorization to conduct my study. Upon receiving permission and commencing participant recruitment, I observed strict measures to safeguard the identities of individuals and not disclose any information, even to the colleague who initiated the snowball sampling process. I interviewed only consenting volunteers who expressed their agreement by replying with "I consent" to an email containing the consent form. To further uphold privacy, I assigned each volunteer an identifier to use in place of their name on all study-related documents and files. In my research analysis, I took great care to ensure that participants and their words were represented with accuracy.

All study documents and files have been securely stored in my home office and on a password-protected computer. I did not share any raw data with anyone except with members of my dissertation committee. I intend to preserve all documents and files for five years following the completion of my study, after which I will destroy paper documents and wipe digital files using a tool such as Eraser™.

Summary

This chapter included an overview of the research design and rationale, as well as the purpose of the study, research questions, and my role as the researcher. It I described the methodology which included information on participant selection, instrumentation, data analysis plan, trustworthiness, and ethical procedures. The problem that was the focus of this study is that leadership practices have been unsuccessful in terms of supporting dual language elementary school teachers and minimal research has explored

teachers' perspectives of leadership in this area. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore perspectives of rural public school teachers regarding leadership practices they found effective in the successful creation of a new dual language elementary school. Research questions involved how teachers who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school described leadership practices they found effective and ineffective in creating such a program. In Chapter 4, I describe results of research and the data analysis process.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore teacher perspectives of leadership practices with supporting dual languages in elementary schools. There were two RQs for this study:

RQ1: How did teachers who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school describe leadership practices they found effective in terms of creating such a program?

RQ2: How did teachers who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school describe leadership practices they found ineffective in terms of creating such a program?

In this chapter, I provide a comprehensive overview of the research setting, including details about the location, context, and time frame of the study. Next, I describe participants interpretations of results. The data collection process is outlined in detail, including methods to collect and analyze data. Additionally, I present evidence of the trustworthiness of data, including measures to ensure validity and Results of d thematic analysis are presented in a clear, concise, and comprehensive manner, highlighting key themes and patterns that emerged from data.

Setting

The data collection process was conducted during the ending stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, which impeded my ability to conduct face-to face interviews with participants. Therefore, interviews were conducted via telephone or Zoom; all 11 participants chose to be interviewed using Zoom.

I collected interview data from 11 dual language elementary educators, which included 10 women and one man. Three were kindergarten teachers, all of whom had been teaching for more than 16 years. Two first grade teachers participated, one of whom had been teaching for 10 years and the other for 16 years. One third grade teacher participated in the study who had taught for 11 years. Two fourth grade teachers participated, one of whom had 8 years of teaching experience and the other 12 years. One fifth grade teacher took part in the study who had taught for 6 years. Two specialists took part: one had 6 years in teaching and the other 12 years. The number of years of teaching experience for these 11 participants ranged from 6 to 20 (see Table 1).

Data Collection

Teachers who participated in this study took part in a school-wide dual language program which was begun in 2019. Of the 35 teachers in the school, 11 responded and agreed to participate in the study and interviews. Interviews began during the first week of June 2023 and were completed within a 6-week period. All interviews were audio recorded using Zoom's recording function; recordings were transcribed by Otter.ai. Each interview was anticipated to take between 20 and 35 minutes, but actual time varied depending on availability of participants. In three instances, interviews lasted for approximately 30 minutes due to the limited time that educators had at the end of the school year. In two interviews, there were interruptions due to Internet connectivity and had to restart, resulting in splitting these interviews in two parts.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Data

Participant#	Gender	Grade Level	Years of Teaching Experience
1	Female	Kindergarte	20
2	Female n		16
3	Female	First	6
4	Female	Specialist	12
5	Female	Fourth	10
6	Male	First	6
7	Female	Fifth	16
8	Female	Kindergarte	11
9	Female n		16
10	Female	Third	8
11	Female	Kindergarte	12
	n		
		Fourth	
		Specialist	

Data Analysis

After each transcription was created by Otter.ai, I downloaded transcriptions and compared transcripts to each audio file. I edited transcriptions so they conformed accurately to recordings. When I was satisfied with each transcript, they were emailed to participants with a request they confirm accuracy of the transcript or suggest corrections. No one returned a response indicating needed changes, so edited transcripts were used as a basis for data analysis.
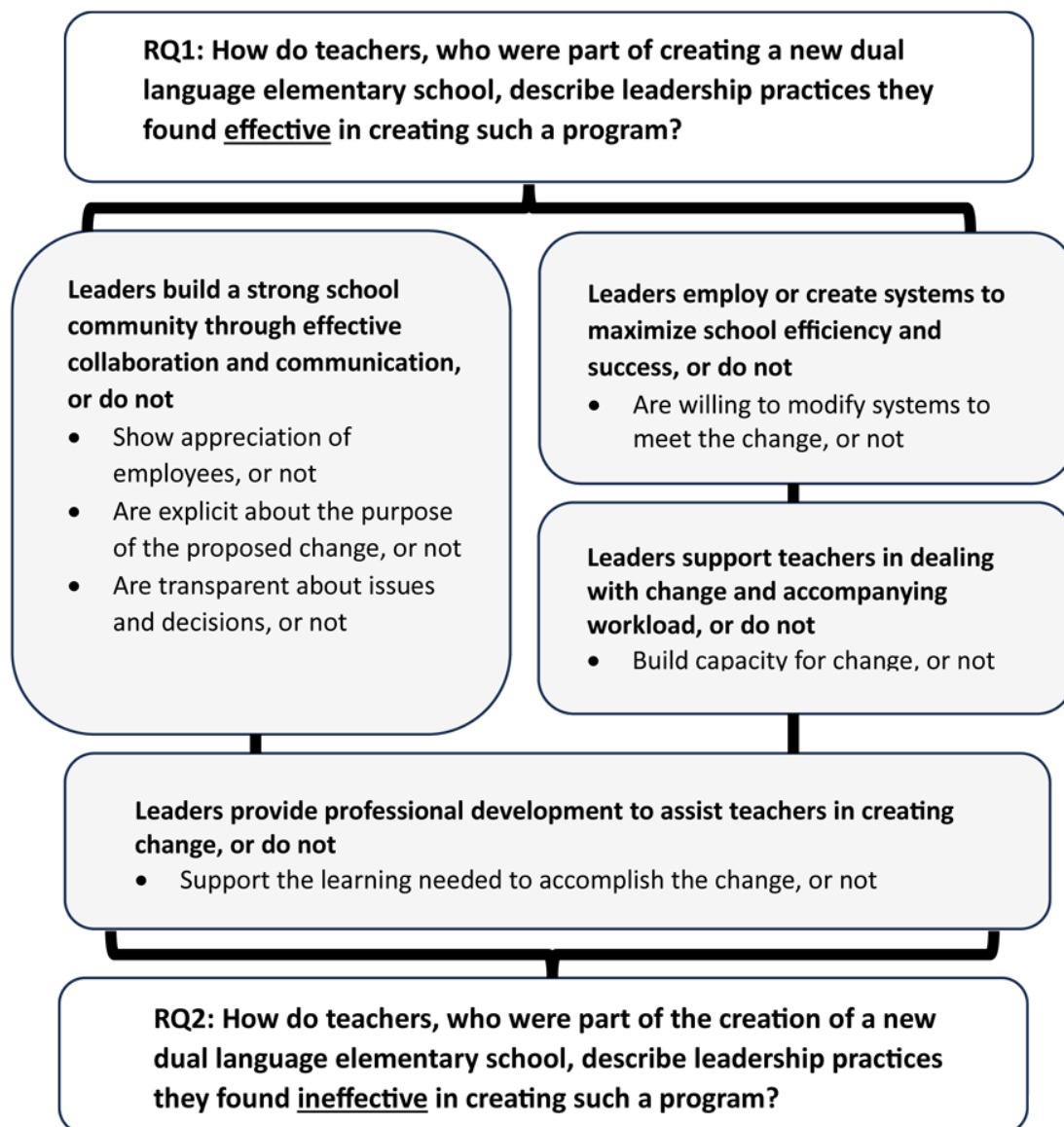
I organized interview data in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, separating data into individual thought units which were represented by sentences or passages. These thought units were then entered into a single continuous column in the spreadsheet. In total, I

derived 242 thought units from data, which resulted in 242 unique codes. Once I derived

these codes, I labeled them with phrases that accurately represented the underlying sense

or meaning of the code. These labels ultimately constituted various categories of data.

Nineteen categories emerged during this process: achieving success in a team-based

environment, administrative support for professional development, collaboration and

effective communication, collaborative growth, community and sense of belonging,

educational assessment on time management, negative emotional response to change,

positive emotional response to change, fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual

support, frustrations involving being overwhelmed and overworked, lack of leadership

change management, language programs for change management, leadership in change

management, networking for resources, parental and community support, promoting

bilingual and multilingual approaches, role of leadership training in development, using

data to drive instructions, and working together toward a common goal.

These 19 categories were then grouped by similarity into four themes. These

themes were building a strong school community through effective collaboration and

communication, employing or creating systems to maximize school efficiency and

success, supporting teachers in terms of dealing with change and accompanying

workload, and providing professional development to assist teachers in creating change

(see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Themes with Associated Categories and Research Questions

RQ1: How do teachers, who were part of creating a new dual language elementary school, describe leadership practices they found <u>effective</u> in creating such a program?

Leaders build a strong school community through effective collaboration and communication, or do not
- Show appreciation of employees, or not
- Are explicit about the purpose of the proposed change, or not
- Are transparent about issues and decisions, or not

Leaders employ or create systems to maximize school efficiency and success, or do not
- Are willing to modify systems to meet the change, or not

Leaders support teachers in dealing with change and accompanying workload, or do not
- Build capacity for change, or not

Leaders provide professional development to assist teachers in creating change, or do not
- Support the learning needed to accomplish the change, or not

RQ2: How do teachers, who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school, describe leadership practices they found <u>ineffective</u> in creating such a program?

According to Whitney and Evered (2022), data are considered discrepant if they deviate from the expected or normative patterns, indicating an anomaly or inconsistency. In other words, discrepant data points refer to those significantly different from the majority of the data or contradict the prevailing trends. Such data points can potentially

offer valuable insights into the underlying processes or mechanisms and hence warrant careful examination and interpretation by researchers and analysts. In this study, I followed guidelines to identify discrepant data. These guidelines included checking for outliers, identifying data points that fell outside of expected ranges, and examining any unusual patterns or trends in the data. If I identified any discrepant data, I was prepared to investigate further to determine the cause. This might involve reviewing the data collection process, checking for errors or inconsistencies, or seeking additional information or input from other team members or stakeholders. Ultimately, my goal was to ensure that the data used in my analysis was accurate, reliable, and free from any major discrepancies that could impact the validity of my findings. I did not encounter any significant issues with discrepant data during my analysis, yet I remained vigilant in my monitoring and review processes to ensure that any potential issues were identified and addressed as quickly as possible.

Results

Results for RQ1

To answer RQ1, I used responses from interview questions to find out what participants thought was effective about the leadership they were provided. All themes were relevant to this question.

The participants stressed the importance of collaborative leadership, prioritizing clear and concise communication. One important factor highlighted by participants was the importance of leaders building a strong school community through effective collaboration and communication. The evidence suggests that the school leadership and

principal played crucial roles in creating a cohesive environment at the school. P2 said, "The school leadership proposed collaboration among teachers to unify the school and leverage it more with the district and its programs," while P4 shared, "The leaders took charge and encouraged the teachers to contribute their knowledge to build a better future for the students." In addition, P4 also stated, "The current leader clearly understands the school's bigger picture and has a vision to lead it towards success. The principal also ensured that the teachers were aligned with their vision." Furthermore, P9 shared, "We were fortunate to have the support of the principal and join the team, which made the transition into the program much smoother." Collectively, these pieces of evidence suggest that the school leadership was instrumental in creating a collaborative and unified environment that contributed to the school's overall success.

Participants highlighted the significance of effective leadership in creating a supportive environment throughout the school. P1 said, "The administration was very supportive of us, and we could always count on them whenever we needed help." P10 added, "A positive work environment and a shared sense of purpose among staff are essential for success. At [School B], we had a healthy staff culture that contributed to our success." P3 mentioned:

> Regular staff meetings ensure everyone was on the same page. The communication channels were always open to all staff members, and we could receive emails from admin and staff. I was happy to see staff members communicating with admin approval.

Participants reported that it was important for effective change that leaders guided the school community in collaborative growth, were transparent about issues and decisions, and created a sense of belonging in the process of creating a successful dual language program. Participants reported that these factors helped to build a stronger school community. As P2 shared, "Having teachers work together for the success of this initiative is crucial because, ultimately, everyone benefits. By involving teachers in the implementation process, they feel valued and heard, and initiative is more likely to be a success."

The second main finding was that leaders are effective when they employ or create systems to maximize school efficiency. P10 shared, "A critical factor that determines the success of a dual-language program is the staff culture." P6 stated:

> One option is to have dedicated dual-language schools, but this is not always feasible. Schools can instead incorporate dual-language strands into their programs and train teachers in the material. Building administrators must also support the program to ensure its success.

P1, P5, and P6 shared their thoughts on how leaders can employ or create programs to maximize school efficiency and success. P1 said, "One of the most significant advantages of working in a dual-language program is the high parental involvement. Unlike in other districts, parents are usually eager to help and support their children's education." In addition, P5 stated, "It is crucial to have good partnerships with other schools and offer mentorship opportunities to staff to alleviate some of the pressure. This ensures that everyone is working towards the same goals." P6 claimed:

[School B's] principal fought hard to keep the dual language program in place, as it had a great program. It would be nice for [School C] to be exceptional, as it would set them apart from [District B] and allow them more leeway in assessments and schedules.

Participants suggested that incorporating dual-language strands into existing programs while training teachers in the material could be a viable option, because creating dedicated dual-language schools may not always be feasible. Additionally, good partnerships with other schools and offering mentorship opportunities to staff were suggested to alleviate the pressure. Finally, the principal's support for systems to support change was seen as critical in maintaining and improving the program's quality.

The third main finding of RQ1 revealed that effective leaders support teachers in dealing with change and the accompanying workload. When asked about the principal's strategy for successfully transitioning towards a dual language school and the work involved to successfully achieve this goal, P11 shared:

[The] district leader seized an opportunity and proposed making the dual language program a whole-school initiative. The district leader was involved in all decision-making processes as the program grew from just two schools to multiple schools in the district.

P2 said, "The principal played a critical role in advocating for the dual language teachers and ensuring their needs were considered when making decisions." Participants mentioned that often, when proposals or decisions were made, the dual language teachers felt free to raise issues unique to their classrooms, such as with the curriculum, teaching

in both English and Spanish, and how this might affect events such as open houses and orientations. The importance of a well-suited curriculum for dual language teachers in effectively guiding and instructing students who are learning two languages was another a key factor affecting teacher workload. P8 said:

> During a time when everything was new, they had to translate their curriculum from Spanish to English, adjust to new writing assignments and allocation times, and adapt to a completely new curriculum.

P3 mentioned, "The school recently adopted a new curriculum for next year and is replacing its old textbooks. We were concerned that district-provided materials are unavailable in Spanish, even though it is a dual-language school." P4 said, "Teachers are firm in their conviction that such a curriculum is essential. This curriculum, acting as a blueprint, serves to help teachers determine the best approach to meet the unique needs of these students."

Participants mentioned that providing effective professional development was an essential aspect of leadership during school change. P2 said:

> School leadership has always done an exceptional job in providing professional development. I remember feeling excited and enthusiastic as we prepared for the start of the program. There was anticipation and anxiety to make the dream a reality.

P4, P8, and P1 described positive experience with the professional development opportunities that were offered to them. P4 said, "Effective professional development is a crucial aspect of the growth and development of teachers." P8 added, "Professional

development programs provide teachers with the necessary tools, knowledge, and skills to enhance the teaching practices and improve student outcomes." Additionally, P1 added, "Teachers appreciated the opportunity to collaborate and learn from other educators, which further enriched their professional growth." Overall, participants expressed their gratitude for the professional development opportunities and emphasized the importance of continued learning and development for all educators.

Other support was also described that participants thought was effective. For example, P3 mentioned, "During our professional development days, we had many trainers who provided us with training and support. We also had coaches available to us." In addition, P3 shared, "The district provided teachers with workshops, training, and strategies to build their biliteracy. Teachers attended meetings both locally and in our own building since the program department was housed in our building." P5 added, "We were eager to attend every training course that we believed would benefit our new school. Being a new team with a majority of young staff, attending these courses was crucial for our growth and development." P9 reported, "We spent many hours on professional development, focusing on biliteracy. We put a lot of time into planning biliteracy strategies to ensure that our program would be successful. We kept up with our professional development to ensure success." Participants suggested that leadership development programs for principals tasked with creating school change should focus on providing leaders with the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience to navigate complex adjustments to systems and motivate their teams to embrace new ways of working.

The purpose of RQ1 was to examine how teachers who were part of creating a new dual-language elementary school described leadership practices they found effective in creating such a program. Teachers in this study reported that the most effective leaders in school administration were those who prioritized collaboration and communication. To build a strong sense of community within the school, these leaders placed a significant emphasis on working together with teachers. They showed appreciation and recognition for teachers, while also being explicit about the purpose and goals of any proposed changes. Participants emphasized the need for leaders to provide professional development opportunities for teachers and create a supportive environment for change.

Results for RQ2

I used responses from interview questions to determine what participants thought was ineffective about the leadership they were provided.

P2, P4, and P8, felt that the schools operated as separate units, with minimal communication and collaboration between the administration. As a result, the participants believed there was much potential for improvement in this area. For example, P8 mentioned, "When the school year began, the principal was introduced to the staff. However, due to the demands of overseeing two schools, the principal was only available at our school for half of the week." P4 and P2 both suggested that there should be more collaboration and communication to ensure that everyone is on the same page and working together. P2 shared:

> The lack of partnership between administrators and district staff has been a
>
> significant challenge. District staff communicated something, leaving questions

about whether building principals knew it. To avoid confusion, there should be

more collaboration between both parties, which helps staff retention.

P4 mentioned, "The lack of cohesion hindered the ability to work towards a common

goal. There should be more frequent and open communication channels between the

principals and staff to be on the same page working together as a unified team." These

data suggest that effective communication and collaboration are necessary for building a

cohesive and successful team.

In addition, participants spoke about challenges in merging schools that each had

their own patterns and practices, and acclimating to a new culture. P7 reported:

One of the challenges of merging two schools is that each has its unique culture

and climate. This was no exception at School C, where there was tension between

adhering to the "School A way" and the "School B way."

P9 added, "It can be a challenging experience to acclimate to the school's unique culture,

which includes different teaching methodologies, communication styles, and

expectations." P6 also mentioned issues with coordinating schedules and priorities, which

may have further exacerbated the challenges faced by the staff: "There was an issue that

arose was coordinating schedules and priorities. For example, Spanish time had

previously been viewed as an untouchable fixed time slot, but now events and other

activities were taking place." Additionally, P10 reported the difficulties faced by the

school in implementing two separate behavior plans, which could be seen as a result of

the different teaching methodologies and policies followed by the two schools, and said,

"It was challenging to implement two separate behavior plans that simply could not be

reconciled. With one school adhering to Behavior Plan 1 and the other following Behavior Plan 2, it was impossible to combine these two approaches.

The quotes mentioned above highlight the various challenges faced by the staff and faculty of School C. Overall, these quotes highlight the complex nature of running a school and the challenges faced by the staff and faculty in ensuring a smooth and successful operation. To sum up, participants felt that there was a lack of communication and collaboration between the principals of the schools, hindering their ability to work towards a common goal. They suggested that there should be more frequent and open communication channels between the principals and staff. The implementation of two separate behavior plans created a significant obstacle that was difficult to overcome. The merging of two schools also brought challenges, such as adjusting to the norms and values of a new school and coordinating schedules and priorities.

The second main idea from RQ2 was the difficulty teachers felt in dealing with change and overwhelming workload when leaders were ineffective in providing them with support. For example, P10 reported, "Dual language overall is very time-consuming." P1 added, "I felt overwhelmed by the amount of information presented to us. Although I do not recall the specifics, I remember that much information was provided, including guidance from our dual language coaches." P11 agreed:

> Last year, our situation hit rock bottom. We were overworked and underpaid, trying to build a plane while flying. We eventually decided that enough was enough. We were not even being compensated for the extra work we were putting in.

P11 added:

> When we began to voice our concerns, district leaders tried to appease us by
>
> offering to pay for any additional hours if we wrote a proposal. This offer was not
>
> enough for people who were fed up with the situation.

For P10, it was difficult to understand the school's vision because there was never a clear

direction. P10 shared:

> It seemed like the administration was trying to please multiple schools instead of
>
> creating a single, unified one. We are a brand new school, and we must follow our
>
> own path instead of trying to merge two different ones.

P7 said, "It was frustrating that meetings were frequently scheduled during our

intervention time, which was a prime example of how people often overlook the

importance of such sessions." P10 added:

> A lot of time was spent just trying to understand what our school's purpose was.
>
> We cannot be rated or graded the same as other schools because we are unique,
>
> and this is something that the district still does not seem to understand.

Leaders' responses to the emotional effects of change significantly affected teachers'

capacity for change implementation when what they felt was an overwhelming workload.

Some participants expressed frustration with being overworked and overwhelmed. They

also highlighted specific leadership issues such as unclear directions, lack of

compensation, and meetings scheduled during intervention time.

The third main idea that emerged from RQ2 was that some leaders provided

ineffective professional development to assist teachers in creating change. P6 said:

While it is true that the district offered days for us to be released to work on a unit, backward planning, and similar tasks, it was not a popular move among teachers. The professional development that the district leaders wanted to provide us with was not what we were asking for, and this caused a lot of tension. There were always changes to it, and it felt like we weren't being heard.

P2 commented, "We had many opportunities for professional development, but it was still a challenge for some staff members. There is still so much more to learn and discover, and I think it would have been beneficial if we had more guidance."

The purpose of RQ2 was to examine how teachers who were part of the creation of a new dual language elementary school described leadership practices they found ineffective in creating such a program. The participants underscored the crucial role of leadership in supporting teachers to cope with changes and the concomitant increase in workload. The need for leaders to provide professional development opportunities for teachers and establish a supportive atmosphere for change was emphasized by participants. A lack of leadership in change management can lead to confusion, resistance, and a failure to achieve the desired outcomes, as some participants pointed out. Participants also discussed leadership development programs that concentrate on equipping leaders with the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience to navigate complicated changes and inspire their teams to embrace new methods of working. Furthermore, administrative backing for professional development opportunities is vital to help leaders continually improve their change management abilities.

Summary of Results

The participants highlighted the pivotal role that effective leadership, collaboration, and communication played in support of creation of a dual language school, and negative effects of ineffective leadership. The conversations revolved around the idea that successful leaders are those who implement or establish programs that enhance the school's efficiency. The participants unanimously agreed that such leaders should extend their support to teachers in adapting to change and managing their accompanying workload. Participants also emphasized the importance of a well-designed curriculum for dual-language teachers to effectively guide and instruct students learning two languages.

Furthermore, the participants expressed their belief in the essentiality of providing effective professional development as a crucial aspect of successful leadership practice. They noted that the absence of effective communication and collaboration between the administration resulted in schools operating as separate entities. The participants acknowledged that there is much room for improvement in this area. They also discussed the challenges that teachers face when dealing with change and managing their workload when leaders fail to provide adequate support. Some participants noted that leaders provided insufficient professional development to assist teachers in bringing about change, which further exacerbated the problem.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the perspectives of rural public-school teachers regarding the leadership practices they found effective in the

successful creation of a new dual language elementary school, specifically with regard to the leadership practices they found to be effective and ineffective in establishing such a program. To support the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the findings, I employed rigorous methodologies, such as triangulation of data by cross-checking quotes against the collected data, recording of interviews, and data derived from verbatim transcription verified by each participant. Additionally, prolonged engagement was used to ensure that the gathered data was accurately reported, reliable, and trustworthy. Furthermore, a systematic approach was applied to document the research process, including participant-selected quotes and analysis techniques. This approach ensured transparency and accountability in the research process.

Summary

Findings indicate that leadership played an influential role in terms of creating a conducive environment that encouraged collaboration and unity among staff and faculty. Participants emphasized the importance of effective leadership in terms of guiding a collaborative growth community and being transparent about issues and decisions to create a sense of belonging and achieve a successful dual-language program. Additionally, creating a strong school community was reported to be instrumental in terms of ensuring that the program was successful. Participants stressed the significance of staff culture, parental involvement, and building administrators' support to ensure the program's success. Participants suggested incorporating two languages into existing programs while training teachers about the material could be a viable option, as creating dedicated dual language schools may not always be feasible. They also proposed

partnerships with other schools and mentorship opportunities to staff could help alleviate some of the pressure. Participants highlighted the critical role played by principals in terms of maintaining and improving program quality. Leadership professional development programs were suggested to provide leaders with necessary knowledge, skills, and experience to navigate complex changes and motivate their teams to embrace new ways of working. Effective communication and collaboration were noted as essential for building cohesive and successful teams.

Participants also illustrated various challenges faced by staff and faculty. These challenges included lack of communication and collaboration between principals of schools, hindering their ability to work towards a common goal. Participants suggested there should be more frequent and open communication channels between principals and staff. Additionally, implementation of two separate behavior plans created a significant obstacle that was difficult to overcome. Merging of two schools also brought challenges such as adjusting to norms and values of the new school and coordinating schedules and priorities. Evidence suggests the school faced several challenges in terms of implementing a successful dual-language program. However, effective leadership, a strong school community, and collaboration among staff and faculty were reported to be critical factors in overcoming these challenges.

Chapter 5 includes interpretations of these findings. In addition, I discuss limitations, recommendations for future research, and implications for social change. Participants in this study described the importance of effective leadership and problems that can result when leadership is less effective.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore perspectives of rural public school teachers regarding leadership practices they found effective during successful creation of a new dual language elementary school. The study was conducted using semistructured interviews. A qualitative design was chosen to explore experiences and opinions of individuals with direct knowledge of the phenomenon under study (see Caelli et al., 2003). This study was necessary as little research has been conducted on creating dual-language elementary schools or leadership strategies that are necessary to integrate students and teachers into a cohesive community. I addressed how teachers who were part of creating a new dual language elementary school describe leadership practices they found effective and ineffective in creating such a program.

Participants described effective leadership as collaborative and giving priority to clear and concise communication. They described how effective leaders used or developed programs to maximize school efficiency and supported teaching in terms of dealing with change and the accompanying workload. Effective school leaders provided teachers with relevant professional development. By contrast, participants found ineffective leadership practices that seemed to ignore their input, failed to meet challenges of creating strategies for managing change, and discounted increases in teacher workloads and need for relevant professional development to assist them in coping with change. Chapter 5 includes findings as well as limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and implications for practice.

Interpretation of Findings

A key finding of this study was that participants found school leaders effective who worked to establish collaborative leadership and provided transparency when explaining their decision-making processes. They stated effective collaboration and communication in the workplace not only helped to build more robust communities but also created a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging had a positive effect on team morale, individual productivity, and job satisfaction, according to participants. Shaked and Schechter (2019) contended the most effective approach in terms of implementing educational changes is through distributive leadership. Torres (2019) characterized distributive leadership as a group of leaders working to bring about positive changes. According to participants, having a strong leader is crucial in building a robust school community that fosters effective collaboration and communication, as well as establishing trust among staff members. Knecht (2019) asserted it is essential for school administrators to create a fair and inclusive school environment that caters to everyone. Palumbo and Manna (2019) stressed the need for principals to adapt their practices and structures to align with dynamic social environments. Carlyon and Branson (2018) emphasized the importance of paying attention to those responsible for producing change in addition to directing the change itself. Fullan (2008) suggested effective leadership involves making decisions during situations that require action and listening during complex times. Participants expressed that collaboration and communication were crucial in terms of building robust school communities. Effective communication is critical for

leaders to exert influence effectively and create lasting positive outcomes within and outside their organizations (Knecht, 2019).

Participants spoke about the significance of creating a work environment that promoted employee engagement, which eventually led to the success of the dual language program. They talked about the principal's successful transition strategy to create this program and efforts to make it happen which improved overall success and efficiency of the school. to DeMatthews and Izquierdo (2020), leaders of dual language schools face the challenge of creating a school environment that is culturally responsive and addresses educational disparities. This provides flexibility for teachers and administrators to tailor materials to meet language needs of students while promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity (Szeto et al., 2019). DeMatthews and Izquierdo (2020) claimed educational leaders need to promote social justice to create more inclusive school environments. However, differences in terms of demographics may hinder the ability of administrators to implement effective leadership practices (Szeto et al., 2019).

Another important finding from the study is the need for leadership support involving teaching, particularly with regard to dealing with change and workload associated with adopting a new curriculum and navigating new systems. One participant stated, "I still have to teach all those English rules and everything in English, but my mindset has always been in Spanish." DeMatthews and Izquierdo (2020) found dual language teachers face a heavier workload compared to their general education counterparts. DeMatthews and Izquierdo noted these teachers in dual language programs are required to conduct instruction in two languages and frequently must develop their

own curriculum due to lack of resources involving the targeted language. Lachance et al. (2019) emphasized difficulties when teachers must teach in two languages and also engage students in communicating while using appropriate language patterns. According to participants, principals were effective when they recognized these difficulties and offered support and sympathy.

Another key finding from the study pertained to effective professional development. Participants expressed their appreciation for opportunities to learn and grow as educators, highlighting the importance of continuous learning and development when they were asked to implement a change. Several participants reported that staff members at other elementary schools with dual language programs attended informational professional development sessions about these programs and were encouraged to collaborate during school meetings to implement this change. This was made possible because the entire dual language elementary staff worked together on projects they were undertaking. Kalkan et al. (2020) stated active engagement fosters collaboration and buy-in and has the power to drive initiatives forward. Participants also mentioned they had undergone extensive professional training for many hours with the aim of promoting biliteracy. Teachers and the district had invested a significant amount of time and effort in planning effective biliteracy strategies for their dual language program to succeed. Participants expressed their gratitude towards their leaders for opportunities to collaborate and learn alongside their fellow educators. One participant recommended leaders explore two-way dual programs that are already operational and analyze their registration processes for both English and Spanish speakers. It is essential for leaders to

carefully examine this ensure its success from the very beginning stages of opening a dual language school. Mestry (2017) suggested administrators seek personal professional development opportunities to enhance their educational knowledge and readiness to lead.

Participants found ineffective practices that ran counter to these four findings. They conveyed that ineffective leadership strategies were unhelpful in terms of reducing stress on employees during periods of change which led to mistrust among staff. Participants shared their struggles when joining new teams, dealing with communication challenges, and managing the negative effect of change within their district. One participant noted, "it felt like the focus was on pleasing the administration rather than demonstrating leadership." Fullan (2001) claimed leaders should participate as learners to guide their staff through change. According to Weinstein et al. (2018), trust among personnel in organizations creates a safe and positive atmosphere, while a lower level of trust can fuel negative perceptions. Bagwell (2019) stated it is important to acknowledge educational settings can present numerous challenges, particularly for linguistically and culturally diverse populations. Participants reported there was a lack of clear understanding of goals for dual language education in the school, which caused conflicts between staff and the district. This resulted in conflicting visions of what the dual school's purpose was. According to Fullan (2001), the focus of a change initiative can easily shift in the wrong direction if leaders fail to positively guide their constituents towards a shared purpose.

Carlyon and Branson (2018) emphasized that leaders require support when leading change in education. This finding is consistent with Mestry (2017), who

emphasized the need for leaders to invest in their own professional development and learning to enhance their educational knowledge and leadership preparedness. According to Carlyon and Branson (2018), leaders must pay equal attention to those responsible for producing change as they do to dictating the change itself. While participants in this study largely believed the change to a dual language school was successful, there was often frustration and distress that could have been avoided with leadership that was consistently collaborative and responsive to teacher needs.

Limitations of the Study

It is important to acknowledge that the study may have certain limitations which could potentially affect the interpretation of the results. Notably, the participants were recruited from only one school district out of over 100 districts in the region. Consequently, the participants who responded to the invitation fliers may have shared similar experiences while answering the interview questions, as they were mainly from the same school. This could potentially restrict the generalizability of the findings to other districts and regions. However, no significant event occurred that could have distorted the results of the study.

Recommendations

In light of the above limitation, it is strongly recommended that the research study be replicated in diverse states or regions across the United States. By doing so, it will be possible to determine the applicability of the findings beyond the original location of the study. This will help to establish the validity of the results and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the various factors that contribute to effective leadership

in educational settings. Conducting the research in different contexts will allow for a more nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in educational leadership and will help to ensure that the results can be generalized to different regions of the country.

Another recommendation is to conduct a study to investigate the experience of principals who are caught in the middle between the state or district and the teachers. Such a study will provide insights into the challenges faced by principals and will help in devising strategies to support them in effectively managing the competing demands of different stakeholders. The findings of such a study could also be used to inform policy decisions and improve the overall functioning of the education system.

Additionally, it is recommended to conduct a follow-up study with parents to gather their feedback and experience. It would be beneficial to understand how parents perceived the school leaders' efforts in leading and supporting families. This information could help school leaders to better understand the needs of parents and improve their methods of involving and engaging families in the school community.

Based on the nature of the study, I would recommend replicating the study with another language group. Creating a dual language school in a different language community, especially in indigenous language groups or sign language, could potentially create different results and add to our understanding of the challenges. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding and insights into the effectiveness of dual language education programs in different linguistic and cultural contexts. Finally, I recommend checking back in with teachers who participated in this study after a couple of years to see how the dual language program is working out. This will provide valuable

feedback and insights that can help improve the program and ensure its continued success.

Implications

The implications for practice include that effective leadership involves providing adequate support to teachers to manage their workload and adapt to changes. This support can be in the form of resources, tools, and training to help them cope with the demands of their profession. Leaders can provide access to professional development opportunities, technology-based tools, and instructional resources to keep teachers updated on best practices and new teaching techniques. Moreover, offering flexible work arrangements and workload management strategies can help teachers maintain a healthy work-life balance and enhance their productivity and job satisfaction. By taking these steps, leaders can create a positive work environment for all involved and ultimately improve student outcomes.

Secondly, leaders must prioritize clear communication with team members and stakeholders. They can use various channels such as email, chat, video conferencing, and face-to-face meetings. To maximize efficiency, leaders should design effective programs and policies that streamline processes, optimize resources, and leverage technology to automate routine tasks and reduce administrative burdens.

Thirdly, school leaders need to invest in effective professional development programs that are tailored to the needs of individual teachers. This can involve providing opportunities for ongoing learning and development, mentoring and coaching, and access to relevant resources and tools. Teachers should be encouraged to collaborate and share

best practices through various means, such as regular team meetings, professional learning communities, and peer observations. By promoting a culture of continuous learning and improvement, teachers can enhance their skills and knowledge, which can ultimately lead to better student outcomes. Therefore, it is important for school leaders to prioritize the ongoing professional development of teachers and create a culture of collaboration and continuous learning within their organizations.

Conclusion

The research findings suggest that effective leadership is crucial for creating a successful dual-language program. To ensure success, it is imperative to create a collaborative community that promotes transparency in decision-making, staff culture, parental involvement, and building administrators' support. However, it is important to note that implementing effective leadership strategies requires a deep understanding of change management challenges. A lack of communication and collaboration between school principals can seriously hinder progress toward a common goal. Emotional reactions to change play a crucial role in building change management capacity and managing an overwhelming workload. Therefore, leaders should adopt a proactive approach to addressing these challenges.

Poor leadership can lead to disengaged and unmotivated employees, decreased productivity, and neglected employees' needs. Thus, it is essential for leaders to create a supportive work environment that fosters employee engagement, motivation, and productivity. To achieve this, leaders must prioritize employee satisfaction, create opportunities for professional development, and provide support when necessary. A

positive work environment that fosters growth and development can have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction and performance. Therefore, it is essential for leaders to prioritize effective leadership strategies that promote a positive work environment and foster growth, development, and success.

Dual language programs have the potential to bring about positive social change by promoting bilingualism and multiculturalism in our communities. These programs aim to provide instruction in two languages, typically the primary language of the community and a second language, such as English or Spanish. By facilitating the acquisition of multiple languages, dual language initiatives can help break down language barriers and promote cross-cultural understanding. Additionally, these programs can provide greater access to educational and employment opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds. As a result, effective leadership in support of dual language initiatives has the potential to create a more inclusive and equitable society, where individuals of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds can thrive.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

1. I want to talk with you about the time when your school became a two-way dual language school. What do you remember about that time?

   a. Was the principal the one who led that initiative in your building? [*if they say it was someone else, I will use that title in place of "principal" in the remaining questions*]

2. Tell me a little bit about your principal's leadership role in creating the dual language program.

   a. How did they make you feel during this process? [*if necessary to get to the first Fullan concept, I will ask, How much did you feel appreciated and valued?*]

3. Describe how your principal explained why the school was creating a two-way dual-language program in the entire school.

   a. How did they help you understand the purpose of that change?

4. With a big change like that, there usually is a need for more resources, such as staffing, time set aside for the work of making the change happen, and even the leader's own availability. Tell me how your principal created the capacity for making this change…

5. How about professional development? What sorts of training, videos or books, outside experts, site visits, conferences, other things, were provided for you as you were trying to make this change?

6. How did your principal make sure everyone always knew what was going on, the setbacks people knew about, how big decisions were made? Did you feel you knew where things stood all the time?

7. Can you think of existing processes and policies that needed to be changed in the transition to becoming a two-way dual language school?

    a. Were those changes made or what happened to adapt the systems you operated under so they would work in the new school?

    b. How much of a role did your principal play in making the changes needed to processes and policies?

8. Overall, how satisfied did you feel with the process of changing to a two-way dual language school?

    a. Tell me more about that…

9. Looking back on it now, what do you think your principal could have done differently that would have made the process go better?

10. What advice do you have for school leaders in another building or district that might be thinking of changing to a two-way dual language format?