NUEVAS ENSEÑANZAS: A CASE STUDY OF IMPLEMENTING RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN A SCHOOL WITH PREDOMINANTLY SPANISH-SPEAKING ENGLISH LEARNERS

BY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of restorative practice on Spanish-speaking English learners (ELs) in a middle school in Southern California. Spanish-speaking ELs have social and emotional needs that may be addressed through restorative practice circles. The study consisted of an examination of how various leadership approaches influence the implementation of restorative practices. The population consisted of school leaders who were selected through purposive sampling. A qualitative case design was used and data were collected using semistructured interviews, analysis of restorative practice documents, and school walkthroughs for evidence of restorative practice. The data were analyzed and codes and categories were generated, which led to the emergence of four themes: (a) restorative practice education is important for both parents and school staff; (b) the school community is provided with a platform for expression; (c) restorative practice can be helpful in addressing challenges and increasing positive outcomes; and (d) restorative practice implementation is based on school philosophy and committee work for sustainability. An analysis of the themes resulted in three recommendations for action: (a) aligning school philosophy with the philosophy of restorative practice, (b) educating parents on restorative practices, (c) and implementing a distributed leadership practice for restorative practice implementation. The findings from this study can be used to prepare educational leaders to implement restorative practices in schools with a Spanish-speaking EL population.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The academic achievement progress of Latino and Black students is an issue facing the U.S. school system. Their success is affected by disciplinary issues that arise in schools and ultimately affect academic achievement. School leaders do not yet fully understand the best methods to mitigate disciplinary issues. In examining negative effects of school discipline, Castillo (2013) concluded many Latino and Black students have had academic progress hindered by policies used to address disciplinary issues. These policies, commonly referred to as *zero-tolerance policies*, result in a disproportionate representation of minority students.

Zero-tolerance policies are punitive in nature. These policies rely on harsh disciplinary rules and sanctions that often lead to suspensions, expulsions, and underperformance in academic progress. When such policies are applied to students, students with disciplinary problems spend time outside the classroom, which leads to missed instructional time. The missed instructional time may lead students to underachieve and consequently, drop out of school. Lustick (2017) examined restorative practices in public schools and described how zero-tolerance policies do more harm than good because they do not reduce the number of discipline infractions and may instead alienate students from the school. When students are pushed away from school, they miss instructional time and may develop a negative attitude toward school. Eventually, many of these students find their way into the criminal justice system.

Missing instructional time due to disciplinary reasons—as a result of zero-tolerance policies—is a component of what is commonly known as the *school-to-prison pipeline*. Wilson (2014) described the school-to-prison pipeline as the causal link

between youth educational exclusion and criminalization. The school-to-prison pipeline is partly the result of zero-tolerance policies that school leaders have implemented to manage behavior and increase academic achievement. Berlowitz et al. (2017) interviewed administrators about how zero tolerance leads to the school-to-prison pipeline and concluded the exclusion of students can be described as a phenomenon that systematically pushes students to drop out.

After examining personal narratives of people who ended up in the school-to-prison pipeline, Jones et al. (2018) concluded students who are pushed out by suspensions and expulsions are three times more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system. These individuals frequently spend their adult lives incarcerated (Jones et al., 2018). Zero-tolerance policies are "knee-jerk" reactions to address behavior in schools and, therefore, have been shown to be neither proactive nor preventative.

To address how punitive policies can be mitigated, researchers have explored how restorative practices may provide a better model for addressing behavior than zero-tolerance policies. Wilson (2014) and Skiba (2014) concluded zero-tolerance policies are not effective. These findings have led some school leaders to implement restorative practices as an alternate approach to zero tolerance to meet the social needs of students. Others who have studied zero-tolerance and restorative practices, such as Gardner (2016) and Thorsborne and Blood (2013), have affirmed the ineffectiveness of zero-tolerance policies, leading to increased school awareness of implementing restorative practices. Alternative approaches to zero-tolerance policies may be effective in reducing unwanted behavior and interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline.

Low academic performance is a characteristic of some students who become part of the school-to-prison pipeline. Low academic performance can have a negative impact, leading to incarceration. Wilson (2014) examined the negative influence of discipline in education and reported schools heavily contribute to the U.S. prison population, with more than half of all inmates entering prison without a high school diploma. Without a high school diploma, adults may not be prepared to fill well-paying jobs. Backman (2017), in a study of high school dropouts and criminal behavior, found youth who fail to earn high school diplomas are at a higher risk for poverty, poor health, and criminal behavior than youth who complete K-12 education. Restorative practices may be an appropriate alternative to zero-tolerance policies by focusing on building relationships and keeping students in school in a learning environment where they have a higher possibility of positive outcomes, rather than being out of school and not learning

Latinos comprise one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the United States, and their growing presence in education is becoming increasingly evident. Latino students compromise a considerable portion of the total number of students in the U.S. K-12 public education system. The National Center for Educational Statistics (2017b) projected in 2025, Latinos will be the largest minority population, comprising 29% of the total enrollment in K-12 schools. In research on how the school-to-prison pipeline affects Latinos, Seroczynski and Jobst (2016) indicated at least 18,000 youth are incarcerated annually, and Latino youth are two to three times more likely to be incarcerated than White youth. Latino students comprise a considerable portion of the total student population, and they are disproportionately affected by incarceration.

Many Latino students are also English learners (ELs). Researchers at the National Center for Education Statistics (2017a) reported the number of ELs in the United States in 2015 was 9.5% of the total student population. The California Department of Education (2018) reported in 2017, 1.27 million, or 20.4% of the student population, were ELs. Of that number, 82.19% spoke Spanish, making Spanish-speaking ELs a significant percentage of the EL student population (California Department of Education, 2018).

English learners require specific supports important for academic progress. Researchers have found social supports to be positively associated with student academic achievement. In researching the needs of ELs, Baker (2017) found social supports can come from different sources and are important for the academic achievement of ELs. Social support may help ELs meet their needs to be successful in school. Some challenges ELs encounter are the inability to properly use English and having a sense of disconnectedness to the school. Without proper English skills and a sense of belonging to a school, ELs may have a hard time navigating the demands of their school system.

There have been attempts by researchers to explore the relationship between restorative practices and Latino students, although no studies have been culture specific. Cavanagh et al. (2014) examined a program called Culture of Care, with which restorative practices have been integrated at a high school with a large Latino population. Culture of Care was implemented to improve high school retention rates and build relationships between teachers and students. The researchers concluded this program changed teachers' practices of addressing behaviors, leading to improved learning and outcomes.

An essential element of restorative practices is building social relationship skills. In a study on the effects of teaching pro-social skills with Latino students, Brown et al. (2012) examined the influence of a school-wide program called Second Step. Second Step is a social and emotional program consisting of lessons that can be addressed through restorative practices. While the researchers examined pro-social skills with all Latinos, they referenced the EL population among Latinos and how they responded to Second Step. They concluded Second Step was an effective program to implement with Latinos and its EL population because of its focus on positive interactions and interpersonal relationships. Although progress has been made in understanding how to meet the social and emotional needs of Latinos through restorative practices, more culture-specific research is needed in the area of restorative practices and Spanish-speaking ELs in light of the school-to-prison pipeline and the academic-achievement gap.

This research was a qualitative case study that used contextual information, interviews, and school walkthroughs as sources of data. While discussing appropriate research models for topics, Smith (2018) explained when researching a topic in social science, qualitative case study is a frequently used research design because it involves the scientific study of humans and social relationships. Data for this study included participant interview transcripts, relevant documents, and notes and photographs from school walkthroughs. Coding and data sorting were used to allow themes to emerge in the data analysis. Through this case study exploration, future school leaders will be able to consider the lessons learned during the implementation of restorative practices in a middle school with Spanish-speaking ELs.

In this study, three leadership theories were used as lenses to view a restorative practices initiative. The implementation of restorative practices often requires a change in a school's culture, and it requires appropriate leadership. One of the theories that informed this study was distributed leadership. Kelley and Dickers (2016) concluded distributed leadership is a framework for leaders to transfer the sole responsibility of leadership from one person to a group of individuals. Many schools have moved from the top-down authoritative form of school leadership to a more distributed model to encourage teachers to take on leadership responsibilities.

The other lens used in this study of restorative practices was transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is practiced in many schools because of its effect on human motivation. Mehdinezhad and Nouri (2016) described transformational leadership as a method where a leader provides opportunities for people to connect on a deep level in such a way that it transforms them. An exploration of distributive and transformational approaches provided leadership theory information for school leaders to consider when implementing restorative practices.

Study Background

In many schools, traditional forms of punitive punishment are still used. Zero-tolerance policies have a focus on the punishment of an individual and push students out of school. Berlowitz et al. (2017) reported zero-tolerance policies include police presence, suspensions, expulsions, and teachers' decisions to refer students for punishment. When students are out of the classroom and not learning, they are more likely to end up in the school-to-prison pipeline. Because restorative practices allow school leaders to address the school-to-prison pipeline, school leaders are more apt to

implement restorative practices in schools with large Black and Latino student populations than in low-minority schools (Berlowitz et al., 2017). Zero-tolerance policies affect Black and Latino students more than White peers because school leaders have disproportionately suspended and pushed out students of color at a higher rate than other groups (Berlowitz et al., 2017).

Current State of the Field in Which the Problem Exists

Many school leaders have been challenged with reducing suspension rates and mitigating the school-to-prison pipeline and have sought alternatives to zero-tolerance policies. One option for addressing discipline and the school-to-prison pipeline is restorative practices. Restorative practices have emerged as an option for school leaders to address discipline with full, comprehensive, or partial implementation.

The school-to-prison pipeline is a social phenomenon where minority students are disproportionately excluded from school for disciplinary issues, eventually proceeding toward the justice system (Berlowitz et al., 2017). In an examination of ending zero-tolerance, Black (2016) described the school-to-prison pipeline in the following steps: (a) a student is suspended, which often leads to more suspensions; (b) the student falls behind academically due to not being in a learning environment; (c) criminal outcomes are more likely due to the student being pushed out of school; and (d) the student becomes part of the juvenile or adult justice system. Each year, about 18,000 Latino youth end up in the juvenile justice system (Seroczynski & Jobst, 2016). In the Latino subgroup, Spanish-speaking ELs are considered a significant subgroup due to their population size in schools. Nationwide, in the fall of 2016, ELs comprised 9.6% of the total student population. The most commonly used reported home languages for ELs

were Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Arabic (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019).

California has the highest concentration of ELs in the nation. The California Department of Education (2018) reported in the state of California, ELs comprised 19.3% of the student population. In California, Barrow and Markman-Pithers (2016) examined the state of ELs across the United States and reported in the homes of ELs in California, 76.5% spoke Spanish with their family. Due to the large number of Spanish-speaking ELs in California, the California Department of Education tracks their progress on standardized metrics in order to analyze their progress Fenner (2014) noted ELs are often characterized by having low socioeconomic status and inabilities to access and acquire academic English outside the school setting. As a result of these factors, schools in California have created specific language classes to increase the English proficiency of Spanish-speaking ELs. These classes include English language development and bilingual instruction.

While students experience challenges in schools, ranging from academic difficulties to social needs, Spanish-speaking ELs face challenges due to their language status. One of the challenges ELs face is a sense of disconnectedness from their schools. Jimerson et al. (2016) examined factors that contribute to educational success among Latino ELs and found school connectedness is an important factor for Spanish-speaking ELs to be successful. When ELs begin school, they may feel alienated from the rest of the classroom group due to language barriers.

Another contributor to student success, especially in literacy for ELs, is having a supportive environment. Christoun (2015) explored academic supports for Spanish-

speaking ELs in Illinois and reported a supportive learning climate is essential for Spanish-speaking ELs to be successful. For many ELs, developing literacy in English requires comprehensive input from teachers, which may be challenging if teachers cannot speak Spanish. A supportive learning environment, where ELs are encouraged and their mistakes are praised as a sign of learning, can lead to success.

Bullying is another challenge ELs encounter, which may arise out of language differences between native English speakers and ELs. The inability to speak English fluently and grammatically correctly may also create a language barrier for ELs. In research on the experiences of immigrant students in the United States, McCloud (2015) suggested Spanish-speaking ELs need relationships in supportive classrooms to meet academic demands. Strong support and healthy relationships can lead to higher rates of academic success, when compared with students who lack support and relationships.

Historical Background

Restorative practices, sometimes referred to as restorative justice, is an alternate form of addressing discipline in classrooms. In examining the origins of restorative practices, Fronius et al. (2016) found restorative practices have roots in premodern cultures of the South Pacific and Americas, where the emphasis was on the harm done by an individual, rather than the act. When the emphasis is placed on the harm done by the individual, there is a change of focus from the act itself to efforts focused on restoring the actions committed by the individual. Restorative practices are the opposite of the current form of addressing unwanted behavior, where the focus is on the negative actions of a person.

Schools have often relied on traditional forms of punishment to discipline students. These traditional forms, such as suspensions and expulsions, have led to the school-to-prison pipeline (Berlowitz et al., 2017). This phenomenon is seen as a form of institutionalized racism in schools, where a large proportion of Black and Latino students do not finish school and become involved in the prison system. The school-to-prison pipeline has led to almost 3.2 million suspensions among K-12 public school students in the 2011–2012 school year (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017b). Restorative practices have been effective in reducing unwanted behavior in students, in contrast to traditional punitive forms of discipline (Gardner, 2016). When schools implement restorative practices with fidelity, students' behaviors typically improve, which diminishes the amount of time students spend outside the classroom for disciplinary reasons.

The use of circles in a restorative practice is a novel approach for many students. Circles are rooted in indigenous practices of addressing social conflict. In one study on the implementation of restorative practices in schools, Pavelka (2013) stated a transformation from the traditional form of learning in a classroom would take place to one that involves a facilitator involved in classroom conversations on various topics. When a new initiative or program is implemented that changes the culture of a school, such as restorative practices, repeated instruction on how to practice it in schools is necessary because it is a paradigm shift in addressing discipline.

Restorative practices offer a systemic approach to social responsibility. Alphen (2014), in a study on social responsibility, found restorative practices provided a practical approach focused on problem-solving skills, restoring relationships, and giving people

opportunities to work with others. A restorative practices program can be part of a comprehensive social and emotional learning (SEL) school initiative, fostering social skills and learning to cope with emotions.

In research on the implementation of SEL programs, Low et al. (2016) explained although school success is measured with academic progress, problem-solving skills and social relationship-building are essential for school success. In a related study, Saeki and Quirk (2015) explored student engagement and SEL. They concluded student engagement in schools is not enough for academic success; students need to have genuine connections to schools to be motivated and have positive outcomes.

An SEL program, in conjunction with restorative practices, can aid students in learning how to integrate their feelings, thinking, and behaviors with daily tasks. Goleman (2004) examined how students can be successful with social and emotional support. Goleman reported when students are part of SEL, they have healthy relationships with peers and teachers, manage goals, navigate emotions, and make responsible decisions. School leaders who implement SEL programs prepare students to have healthy relationships and have strong social and emotional awareness as foundations for their academic progress.

Maslow (2013) developed a hierarchy of basic human needs, which addresses human motivation. Maslow outlined issues that must be addressed before people can reach their full potential. Two of the most important human needs identified by Maslow are safety and love. Costello et al. (2009), in their handbook for teachers on restorative practices, suggested students can explore their feelings, create academic goals, address safety, and build relationships with others through restorative practices circles.

Restorative practices may be an appropriate approach to address some of the needs Maslow identified. Implementing restorative practice circles can create safe and loving environments that provide a foundation for students to have positive academic outcomes.

Deficiencies in the Evidence

Although there have been attempts by researchers to explore the relationship between restorative practices and Latino students, a majority of the restorative practices research has not been culture specific. Cavanagh et al. (2014) implemented a research program, Culture of Care, as a restorative practices response to conflict and aimed at keeping Latino students out of the school-to-prison pipeline. In their research, Cavanagh et al. pointed out the lack of cultural understanding from teachers toward those students who are bilingual, but there was not a specific connection between restorative practices and Spanish ELs.

In a study on restorative practices and Latino students, Rubin (2014) analyzed interactions of Latino students with teachers. The research was centered on increasing the engagement of Latino students to mitigate against the influx of students entering the school-to-prison pipeline. Some activities in their study focused on culturally relevant actions to increase student and teacher bonds, but the researchers did not look at Latino Spanish-speaking ELs specifically. Other researchers, such as Berlowitz et al. (2017) and Wilson (2014), have focused on restorative practices and Latinos without considering the language status of students. One of the recommendations of Acosta et al. (2016), from their assessment of restorative practices impact on positive development outcomes and problem behaviors, was that opportunities exist for more culturally specific restorative practices studies.

Problem Statement

Despite attempts to implement restorative practices, school leaders have not understood the full impact of restorative practices in specific cultural contexts, namely Spanish-speaking ELs. Spanish-speaking ELs have particular needs associated with human and cultural development that restorative circles practitioners may be able to address. Researchers from the Aspen Institute (2018) studied how to increase academic achievement, and they reported learning is social and emotional and can aid a student in their academic growth. Castro-Olivo (2014), in a study on SEL, found Latinos are more likely to report lower levels of school belonging and increased social and emotional problems when compared with levels reported by non-Latino peers. Although there have been research studies conducted with Latinos and restorative practices, the aim of this study will be to examine restorative practices by looking primarily at Spanish-speaking ELs.

Audience

This study is significant because school administrators and leaders can learn how Spanish-speaking ELs perform with the systematic implementation of restorative practices. By learning about how restorative practices were implemented with Spanish-speaking ELs, school administrators and leaders can make informed decisions regarding implementation practices for future restorative practices initiatives. Making informed decisions based on this research can begin a process of applying, extending, or refining restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. Parents of Spanish-speaking ELs will also benefit from this study because it will allow them to understand how socializing and building relationships may support the academic growth of their children. Parents can use

this study to understand how restorative practices may serve as a platform to meet the culturally specific needs of Spanish-speaking ELs.

Specific Leadership Problem

The specific leadership problem is, with an increasing Spanish-speaking EL population, pressure has been placed on school leaders to understand and implement effective leadership practices to meet the needs of students in restorative practices initiatives. School leadership is vital in increasing academic achievement and implementing school initiatives. In a broad exploration of leadership in the school context, Fullan (2007) emphasized leadership is the process by which an individual or a group persuades followers. There are many leadership styles available, and choosing an appropriate style requires careful selection. School leadership is diverse as are the leadership approaches available. School leaders should consider the characteristics of each approach.

Several factors must be considered when an initiative like restorative practices is implemented. Lynch (2012) examined how leaders implemented restorative practices at school sites and pointed out successful implementation requires a change in school culture, training, and buy-in from staff because restorative practices goes against established forms of punitive behavior management on which school systems have relied. Punitive punishment led to the implementation of zero-tolerance policies that can become a gateway for minority students to enter the school-to-prison pipeline.

School leaders often delegate tasks to individuals and teams. Distributed leadership may be an approach for school leaders to consider in the implementation of restorative practices in schools. In research on distributed leadership, Harris (2012)

described distributed leadership as an approach where the work of some individuals and tasks are implemented through the interaction of several people who may assume leadership roles. Similarly, Deflaminis et al. (2016) described what distributed leadership should look like. Distributed leadership is inclusive and does not rely on one individual's decision-making process (DeFlaminis et al., 2016). When decision making is spread across people, it provides opportunities for people to make decisions, in contrast to a top-down model where decisions have already been made. Restorative practices require cultural changes in ways student discipline has been typically implemented. By incorporating more individuals into the implementation process, more people are aware of the requirements and processes needed to create a successful implementation.

Transformational leadership is another leadership theory that can be helpful in understanding the implementation of restorative practices in schools. Transformational leadership is an approach that incorporates charismatic and visionary traits in leaders who inspire followers to transform and produce more than is expected of them. Leaders address emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals through transformational leadership (Northouse, 2016). Lynch (2012), in research on transformational leadership, described transformational leaders as people who develop employee commitment, thereby meeting goals of the organization and producing followers who go beyond their self-interests. When educators are given the knowledge to positively influence the social and academic needs of students, they will go beyond self-interests to make the change. Transformational leadership may be an effective method to inspire teachers in the implementation of restorative practices.

Another leadership theory that provides insight into how restorative practices may be implemented is situational leadership. Originally crafted by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard (2017), the situational leadership framework provides details for leaders on how they can adapt to the performance readiness of followers through four behavior types: (a) directing, (b) coaching, (c) supporting, and (d) delegating. Situational leadership, when applied in school contexts, gives school leaders opportunities to differentiate their leadership according to the needs of followers. When implementing restorative practices, situational leadership may be used by school leaders to systematically and strategically select teachers who will benefit from each of the four behavior types.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the lessons learned from implementing restorative practices in a school with Spanish-speaking ELs. Using the lenses of transformational leadership and distributed leadership, this case study can help school leaders understand the relationship between restorative practices and ELs. This study can also aid school administrators and district leaders in making more informed decisions about implementing restorative practices in schools with Spanish-speaking ELs.

Methodology Overview

A qualitative case study methodology was used for this research. Creswell and Creswell (2018) described qualitative case study as the exploration of a real-life problem that may include multiple sources of information, such as observation, interviews, documents, reports, and audiovisual material. In the area of social science, qualitative case studies are appropriate because researchers may yield plentiful data, contextual

information, and multiple sources of evidence (Smith, 2018). This qualitative case study included the use of interviews, documents, school walkthrough notes, and pictures as sources of data.

Appropriate questioning during interviews is necessary. Yin (2016) explained "how" questions about a current event beyond the researcher's control are appropriate for case study research. Yin stated the most important source of case study evidence is interviews. During an interview, data are collected through open-ended questions that encourage authentic answers and the flexibility for participants to take responses in any direction.

Research Questions

This case study addresses how school leaders implemented restorative practices in a middle school and how Spanish-speaking ELs responded to the implementation. The information gathered from interviews, document analysis, and school walkthroughs yielded important data that were categorized into themes. The findings from this study are of significance for school leaders in that they can make informed decisions about how to implement restorative practices in schools with Spanish-speaking ELs. The findings can also inform school leaders about how transformational leadership and distributed leadership may be useful during implementation of restorative practices. The study is also of significance for students because the findings may lead to better implementation of restorative practices programs in schools. The research questions that guided this study are:

1. What lessons did school leaders learn while implementing restorative practices in a middle school with Spanish-speaking ELs?

2. What lessons did school leaders learn about the social needs of Spanish-speaking ELs?
3. How were transformational leadership and distributed leadership approaches used with restorative practices implementation?

Limitations

Punch (2006) described limitations as unavoidable conditions in a study and delimitations as the defined limits of a study that show what will be included and excluded. Hancock and Algozinne (2017) defined limitations as factors outside the researcher's control and may affect the study. One limitation in this study was the honesty and factuality in the responses from participants during interviews. Triangulation of the data was used to mitigate dishonesty and increase credibility. In describing the purposes for triangulation, Yin (2016) stated information should be cross-checked from multiple sources to increase credibility. Participants were ensured of confidentiality to promote honesty in responses. Because participation was voluntary, there may have been useful information from school leaders and teachers who decided not to participate.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the parameters of a study imposed by the researcher. A delimitation relates to the boundary conditions about with whom, where, and how the study was conducted. As a result of the boundary conditions, findings may not be generalizable to other populations, time periods, or locations. Delimitations may include the choice of interview questions and the selection of participants. For this study, the questions were framed to elicit responses about the social and emotional needs of Spanish-speaking ELs, to explore if restorative practices are meeting the needs of the

students, and if distributed leadership or transformational leadership approaches were used in the implementation. The questions were framed based on the purpose of this study. The use of open-ended questions along with the particular population selected helped form these delimitations.

Definitions of Key Terms

The following terms and definitions were used for the purpose of this study.

English learners (ELs): English learners are limited-English-proficient students acquiring more than one language at the same time (Crawford & Krashen, 2007). Other terms used to describe ELs are limited-English-proficient (ELP), English as a second language (ESL) student, and English language learners (ELLs).

Distributed leadership: Distributed leadership includes the notion that leadership is not solely from an individual; it provides a framework where a leader creates opportunities for multiple interactions amongst workers. In education, distributed leadership involves the interaction of school staff for decision making, as opposed to one senior person. An element of distributed leadership is the development of teams in the organization, where different people at times assume leadership responsibilities needed by the organization, as opposed to the hierarchical models of leadership (Harris, 2008).

Restorative practices: Thorsborne and Blood (2013) defined restorative practices as the practice of restorative justice, which has a focus on accountability for the harm by the wrongdoer and repairing the harm done, involving all stakeholders. It is a different mindset from punitive or retributive forms of justice. In schools, restorative practices involve classroom circles to build relationships, manage disruptions, repair harm, and facilitate successful re-entry to the classroom.

Situational leadership: Situational leadership is a model used by leaders who adapt their leadership style to the developmental needs of followers. The model provides four leadership styles (Blanchard & Hall, 2010).

Social and emotional learning (SEL): Social and emotional learning is the practice of understanding how to manage and express social and emotional needs, which contribute to the successful management of learning, building relationships, solving problems, and knowing how to adapt to the demands of growth and development (Elias et al., 1997).

Transformational leadership: Transformational leadership changes and transforms people, meeting the needs of followers by tapping into motives and treating them as full human beings by engaging with them. Burns (2016) described a transformational leader as a person who is attentive to the needs of followers and helps them reach their fullest potentials.

Zero-tolerance: Zero-tolerance policies are punitive approaches used in schools to address discipline and typically include suspensions, expulsions, and other forms of removal of a student from the classroom (Curran, 2017).

Summary

This chapter contains information about school discipline, ELs in schools, restorative practices, and deficiencies in the literature. It also includes the problem statement, purpose of the study, and research questions. Leadership theories school leaders may use as approaches to implementing restorative practices were also presented. By identifying leadership theories, school leaders may develop knowledge about how to implement restorative practices programs in schools with Spanish-speaking ELs.

The purpose of this study was to explore lessons learned from implementing restorative practices in a school with Spanish-speaking ELs. Despite substantial research on restorative practices and schools, there is a need for more research in culturally specific contexts, such as among Spanish-speaking ELs. This study placed a focus on restorative practices and Spanish-speaking ELs while considering transformational leadership, distributed leadership, and situational leadership as approaches for implementation.

Chapter 2 includes a summary of the field of restorative practices, ELs, and SEL. Examining the literature reveals gaps in the research in the field of restorative practices, specifically with Spanish-speaking ELs and how these practices are implemented in schools. Additionally, three leadership theories, transformational leadership, distributed leadership, and situational leadership, are examined to illuminate how leadership approaches inform how restorative practices can be implemented by school leadership in a culturally specific way.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore lessons learned from implementing restorative practices in a school and the impact on Spanish-speaking ELs. Through the lenses of transformational leadership and distributed leadership, school leaders can use this study to understand how these specific leadership styles may be useful when implementing restorative practices. School leaders can then make informed decisions about how to implement restorative practices in schools with large numbers of Spanish-speaking ELs.

Restorative practices and their impact on Spanish-speaking ELs are absent in the area of educational leadership research. With restorative practices and Latino students, researchers have explored generalities but have done little in terms of culturally specific nuances in restorative practices. Gregory et al. (2018) conducted a study with White, Black, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native American students to explore restorative interventions and their effects on out-of-school suspensions. They concluded student participation in restorative practices reduced the odds of out-of-school suspensions. Although their study included restorative practices, the researchers referenced generalized ELs without being more culture-specific. It is unclear what percentage of the ELs in the study were Spanish speakers.

Anyon et al. (2016) examined restorative interventions in a school district. Their findings led them to conclude restorative interventions lowered the odds of office discipline referrals. Although Anyon et al. (2016) included Latinos, they were not culturally specific in their examination and considered Latinos as a monolithic group.

The absence of research in the area of restorative practices and Spanish-speaking ELs is the aim of this qualitative study.

A review of available research literature in the area of restorative practices, the impact of Spanish-speaking ELs in the school system, and leadership theories was conducted. The research on restorative practices is presented to promote an understanding of prevailing ideas on the topic. The research on Spanish-speaking ELs is presented to highlight the importance and unique needs of this subgroup in U.S. schools. The three leadership theories described in this chapter are transformational leadership, distributed leadership, and situational leadership. Situational leadership will be described briefly because its application is more widely used outside the field of education, yet some components of it can be applied in educational settings. Finally, leadership theories commonly used in an educational context and how they are appropriate in the implementation of a restorative practices initiative will be presented. Exploring leadership theories is important because school leaders can learn from approaches that may be suitable for restorative practices implementation.

Restorative Practices

Before implementation in schools, restorative practices were implemented in the criminal justice system and were known as *restorative justice*. In an analysis of the emergence of restorative justice, Maglione (2018) described the movement as slow and then gaining momentum worldwide over the past 40 years. The momentum has been developing as a result of the need to find alternative approaches to addressing behavior in schools.

Restorative justice is the opposite of a punitive and retributive form of addressing behavior. Wenzel et al. (2007) compared retributive justice to restorative justice and described the latter as a bilateral approach to repair justice in a shared valued-consensus based process, whereas retributive justice is unilateral and has a focus on imposing punishment. When victims and offenders come together after a wrongdoing, a bilateral approach is created, where both parties can focus on repairing the harm done.

One of the issues policy makers have tried to address in the criminal justice system is how to address recidivism. With recidivism being a concern for law enforcement, restorative justice has been implemented to reduce reoffending. In research on restorative justice and the long-term effectiveness on probationers, Kennedy et al. (2018) concluded there was a significant increase in empathic understanding that resulted in less frequent reoffending when restorative practices were implemented. These findings have led to an increase in popularity of restorative justice programs to supplement and, in some cases, replace traditional methods of incarceration. The popularity and effectiveness of restorative justice has led some school leaders to further investigate and implement restorative practices, based on restorative justice principles, in schools as alternatives to zero-tolerance policies.

Zero-tolerance policies have been part of U.S. educational culture for many years. Schools have implemented zero-tolerance policies, which lead to punitive actions to address wrongdoing, eventually leading to a similar pattern of recidivism found in the criminal justice system. Kyere et al. (2018) described the history of zero-tolerance policies in schools. They found zero-tolerance policies originated from the fight on drugs in the 1980s, when harsh policies were implemented in schools. In the 1990s, zero-

tolerance policies were more widely adopted, leading to their use as a form of punishment for minor and major infractions. During the 1990s, a sharp increase in school violence, along with school shootings and the need to ensure safety in schools, fueled the increase and widespread use of zero-tolerance policies. Zero-tolerance policies are punitive actions against the wrongdoer, eventually leading to reoffending because there is not an effort to address the wrongdoer's actions and thoughts leading up to the wrongdoing. A component of zero-tolerance policies is an increase of school policing enforcement to ensure compliance and to address violators of zero-tolerance policies.

School officials have implemented zero-tolerance policies, while at the same time increasing their security efforts. In describing school security and violence, Crawford and Burns (2016) stated efforts of school administrators have historically relied primarily on increasing security, surveillance practices, and counseling programs. An increase in school police and use of video cameras became prevalent in many of U.S. schools during the 1990s and into the 2000s. Through their research, Crawford and Burns discovered that schools that serve minoritized communities often have higher levels of school violence, as evidenced in student behaviors, such as bullying, gang activity, and physical fights. These schools also often have a higher law enforcement presence. As a response to school violence and zero-tolerance enforcement, schools with a high concentration of minorities and low socioeconomic statuses have had increased security on their campuses. In spite of an increase in law enforcement presence, Crawford and Burns concluded there were mixed results regarding the impact of increased security on negative student behaviors. Increased security was often shown to be counterproductive

in decreasing school violence. The increase in zero-tolerance enforcement eventually led to an increase in student expulsions and suspensions.

The increase of student expulsions and suspension in schools eventually leads to the formation of the school-to-prison pipeline. Berlowitz et al. (2017) showed how the institutional implementation of punitive zero-tolerance policies pushes minority students out of schools. Schools that rely on zero-tolerance policies serve as platforms where some students are funneled toward youth incarceration and eventually prison.

The ineffectiveness of student expulsions and suspensions in schools has been questioned in research. Gregory et al. (2016), in their work on restorative practices and school discipline, found after an initial student suspension, any additional suspension for a student increases their likelihood of not graduating from high school by 20%. These zero-tolerance policies are major contributors to the school-to-prison pipeline. Although zero-tolerance policies affect all students, minority students are substantially and disproportionately affected.

McCarter (2017) examined the school-to-prison pipeline and its implications for social workers. McCarter described how, from 1972–2010, suspension rates for White students increased 1.1%, while suspension rates for Latino students doubled from 6.1% to 12%. For African-American students, suspension rates went from 11.8% to 24.3%. For the 2011–2012 school year, African-American and Latino students comprised 39% of the country's student population, yet they accounted for 54% of in-school suspensions and 66% of out-of-school suspensions. In another study on the school-to-prison pipeline with an emphasis on Latino youth, Seroczynski and Jobst (2016) reported at least 18,000 Latinos annually are incarcerated into the juvenile system.

Considering the statistical data on school suspensions for African-American and Latino students, and the need to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline, educational leaders should consider the contributing factors. The school-to-prison pipeline can be broken into distinct components. To better understand the complexity of the school-to-prison pipeline, Kim et al. (2012) emphasized three areas in their research on youth incarceration: (a) zero-tolerance policies, consisting of school suspensions, expulsions, and diverting students toward law enforcement for truancy, (b) school dropout as a result of an ongoing push-out process, and (c) incarceration as a predictor of dropping out of school. The researchers explained these components have led to over-criminalization of students in schools. Kim et al. (2012) argued that radical reform may be the only way to ameliorate the school-to-prison pipeline due to the widespread application and history of zero-tolerance policies. A comprehensive reform toward addressing discipline in schools in the form of restorative practices has developed in the educational system to reverse this trend.

Restorative practices offer a comprehensive approach toward social responsibility for all members of a school. Smith et al. (2015) described informal and formal practices for implementation. Informal practices are designed to encourage relationship building, while formal practices include strategies for restoring damaged relationships. In formal and informal practices, restorative practice circles are key components. Circles can take the form of daily classroom activities to build community, ranging from impromptu circles to address low-level problems in the classroom to formal circles with a whole class to address a serious problem. The researchers suggested high-stakes conferences in

the form of circles for more serious issues involving students, staff, family members, or law enforcement.

Silverman and Mee (2018) described circles as an opportunity for students to have frank discussions about academics, emotional issues, and classroom specific topics. Circles are a key component of restorative practices that address emotional needs of students, while simultaneously providing a proactive method to build relationships. Restorative practices have an emphasis on working with people. Alphen (2014) emphasized restorative practices provide people opportunities to work with others to build relationships. The social element in restorative practices creates avenues for social interactions that benefit all students.

Having a common understanding of restorative practices is essential for school-wide alignment among administrators, teachers, and students. There are variations in school policy documents about restorative practices in schools. Vaandering (2014) reported the following principles are prevalent in the research literature on restorative practices in educational contexts: (a) a focus on the harm done and not the rule broken; (b) promotion of communication and relationship building; and (c) facilitation of dialogue between victim, wrongdoer, and community members. These principles stand in stark contrast to zero-tolerance policies with a focus on the rule broken, lack the promotion of relationship building, and do not promote dialogue between victim and wrongdoer.

Having a clear understanding of restorative practices principles gives school leaders a comprehensive framework for implementation. Ingraham et al. (2016) analyzed one school's implementation of restorative practices over 3 years. The activities during

this 3-year period consisted of research, understanding culture, forming partnerships, development of a three-tiered system of restorative practices, and program design. The authors concluded, after the 3 years of implementation, school and home discipline had improved; discipline referrals had declined; and collaboration among staff members, students, and parents had increased (Ingraham et al., 2016).

Although there is evidence that supports restorative practices in schools, more research is needed to analyze its effectiveness in specific grades. In a study on restorative practices and school climate and suspensions, Augustine et al. (2018) concluded that applying a multiyear approach to restorative practices in a mid-size school district had overall positive effects. The school district reported school climates improved and suspensions decreased, but the academic outcomes for students in the sixth to eighth grades worsened (Augustine et al., 2018). As the researchers in the study only looked at a 2-year time frame, it may be necessary for middle school students to have longer exposure to restorative practices to see positive results. Therefore, a multiyear approach to restorative practices may be useful for schools to consider.

English Learners in Today's Classrooms

Schools in the United States have diverse student bodies. With the influx of immigration and the increase of multiculturalism, many students speak a language other than English. Fenner (2014) noted ELs are the fastest growing population in K-12 schools in the United States. Because of the rapid growth of this demographic, school leaders should deepen their understanding of these students and their needs. English learners are students for whom English is not their first language. This population of students is linguistically diverse, but the most commonly reported first languages are Spanish,

Arabic, Mandarin, and Vietnamese. Within the group of ELs, Spanish speakers comprise a large percentage of the total English-learner population. Barrow and Markman-Pithers (2016) pointed out in California, Spanish-speaking ELs comprised 76.5% of the EL population in 2014. Understanding the social needs of ELs is important for school leaders to be better prepared to support them for academic success.

English learners benefit from social support, like other students; however, the type of support needed can vary depending on the cultural background of the student. In a study on social support for ELs, Baker (2017) reported students from Asian cultures respond to implicit social support, while youth from the United States respond better to explicit social support. For Spanish-speaking ELs, Baker stated school success might be a consequence of social capital. The idea of social capital was explored by Bourdieu (1986), who described how a person's social capital resources accrue as a result of meaningful interactions with others. These social supports can provide practical strategies from peers in the form of school advice on navigating educational demands.

Gandara (1995) studied 50 Chicanos who earned postgraduate degrees and found many participants attributed their success to teachers and family members who provided viable pathways to social capital. Valenzuela (1999) explored Mexican-American high school students and found they valued authentic and caring environments with an emphasis on teacher-student relationships. Valenzuela concluded perceived emotional support could be a contributor to academic success for Mexican-American students.

While students may encounter diverse challenges, Spanish-speaking ELs may have culture-specific challenges. Fenner (2014) characterized ELs as often having low socioeconomic status and the inability to access academic English in noneducational

contexts. Lower socioeconomic status and insufficient access to academic English may hinder the educational progress of Spanish-speaking ELs. Many of these students are also subjected to a perceived lower social status. A detriment for some Spanish-speaking ELs is their accent and the inability for them to sound like native English speakers. McCloud (2015) reported Spanish-speaking ELs with these challenges might experience bullying due to language differences. Students who encounter bullying often benefit from a support system of care that may include teachers or other students who can become a network of people to help victimized students talk about their challenges.

The rigor of school subjects, such as math and English literacy, can be challenging for Spanish-speaking ELs. For some Spanish-speaking ELs, math can be challenging due to abstract concepts and a lack of the understanding of math-related vocabulary. Wright (2018) observed Spanish-speaking ELs in middle school who struggled with algebraic functions displayed disengagement, disruptions toward others, anxiety, and frustration. Wright gave students peer supports and a safe classroom environment to provide comfort and increase their engagement and understanding. The peer and safe-classroom supports proved beneficial to Spanish-speaking ELs in meeting the demands of mathematics.

Baker (2017) examined English-proficiency challenges ELs encountered in middle school and pointed out the concerning achievement gap that exists with ELs. Baker's research revealed social support was critical in assisting students in completing challenging assignments because it provided emotional support and increased motivation. Fenner (2014) found an underlying reason for the achievement gap of ELs is their access to academic English. When students have a deficiency of knowledge about academic

English, they often struggle in school and find school content challenging. An academic deficiency may lead to a lack of motivation. School leaders should provide students with appropriate supports to increase achievement. Providing students with social supports may be something school leaders should consider as part of their SEL program.

Social and Emotional Learning

Addressing the needs of the whole child is essential for academic achievement. In their book on children's needs, Bear and Minke (2006) described how effective schools prepare students for academic and social success. Leaders in these schools understand academic achievement and social and emotional competence are interwoven and can lead to school success. Students face varying levels of challenges every school year. These challenges include academic and social difficulties, simultaneously with emotional issues. Understanding the SEL of children is important for meeting their academic needs.

Social and emotional learning is a process through which students integrate their thinking, feelings, and behaviors into daily tasks. Goleman (2004) examined the relationship between SEL and relationship building. Goleman indicated students who are strong in SEL foster healthy relationships with their peers, manage goals, know how to make responsible decisions, and navigate better their emotions. These actions support Dresser's (2012) findings on the importance of SEL being integrated with reading. Dresser argued SEL should be integrated into reading, so students can learn to understand their emotions through literature. Dresser said students who feel good about themselves and have greater peer acceptance, due to strong social and emotional skills, are able to build empathy, have positive relationships, make appropriate decisions, and learn what to do in challenging situations. When students have strong social and emotional skills, they

are prepared to do well in school because they understand how to work well with others and are capable of managing their emotions.

Social and emotional learning is age specific. Yeager (2017) explored the effectiveness of SEL programs and found that, for younger children, most SEL programs focus on skills. For these younger children, repetitive messages and continuous review of skills over many lessons are ideal. For teenagers, however, Yeager found SEL programs with a focus on mindsets and school climate are more appropriate. These programs may be similar in topic to ones used with younger children, but the focus for older students shifts toward students' mindsets. When students are given appropriate social and emotional support, they are prepared to deal with social and emotional problems, such as bullying, delinquency, suspension and expulsions, and the school-to-prison pipeline. By addressing these problems in their childhood years through fostering healthy relationships, students can minimize the effects of social and emotional problems.

Understanding social and emotional factors related to cognitive-behavioral student engagement is important for school leaders. Yang et al. (2018) identified three factors significantly associated with cognitive-behavioral engagement: (a) teacher-student relationships, (b) student-student relationships, and (c) the learning of specific social and emotional skills. These factors can all be addressed through SEL. Schonert-Reichi (2017) explored relationships in classrooms and the effects on students and concluded classrooms with strong student-teacher relationships are conducive to learning and positive social and emotional development. When students build relationships and develop social and emotional skills, their levels of engagement increase, providing support for academic achievement.

Studies have shown evidence that supports the use of SEL in schools. Yeager's (2017) research on social and emotional programs led to conclusions about effective SEL programs: (a) they can make a positive impact on students' lives; (b) they can help prevent events, such as dropping out of school; (c) they can help reduce crime and the behaviors associated with it; (d) they can help reduce stress; and (e) they can help foster a greater love for learning. Yeager's research affirms the findings of Low et al. (2016): While school success is measured with academic progress, problem-solving skills and relationship building can aid in school success.

In exploring how Latino students' performance can be improved in schools, Theokas et al. (2019) studied a high-performing school in Southern California with a large Latino student body. One of the key components of this high-performing school was relationship building. Healthy relationships were created through relationship-building efforts in which the social and emotional needs of students were addressed. With social and emotional stability being important for students' academic progress, and restorative practices emerging in more schools, school leaders should be working toward understanding how they can be part of a comprehensive school initiative.

Social and Emotional Learning and Restorative Practices

As SEL and restorative practices can be implemented as separate initiatives, understanding how they work in tandem may be beneficial for school leaders. In a study related to the social psychology of education, Kehoe et al. (2018) explored the impact of restorative practices on student behavior and learning. The researchers found restorative practices were used effectively as a method to increase the SEL of students. Alphen (2014) examined restorative practices implementation in schools and noted restorative

practices provide an approach with a focus on students creating relationships with others. When students create these relationships, they can increase their social capital and are able to navigate their emotions. One of the benefits of increased social capital and relationship building is that students may strengthen connections to school communities (Saeki & Quirk, 2015). When students deepen connections to their school, they are more likely to be motivated and have positive outcomes. One method for increasing the SEL of students is to implement restorative practice circles.

Restorative practice circles can be used to increase the SEL of students. Through restorative practices circles, Costello et al. (2009) asserted restorative practice circles can be implemented to explore feelings and create academic goals, promote safety in schools, and foster connections among students. When students discuss feelings, create goals, talk about safety, and build relationships in circles, they address social and emotional needs.

Another component of SEL restorative practices circles can address is safety and belonging needs. Harper et al. (2003) described the importance of safety in the learning trajectory of students. They stated addressing safety needs and senses of belonging in children is important to help them develop to their highest potential. When these needs, along with other components of Maslow's (2013) hierarchy of needs, are met, students have a higher possibility of positive outcomes.

Research Gaps in Restorative Practices With Spanish-speaking English Learners

Researchers have explored restorative practices in school implementation as alternative forms of addressing discipline. There are numerous studies of restorative practices in schools, such as those by Berlowitz et al. (2017) and Wilson (2014), but those studies are not culturally specific. These students examined ethnic groups as a

whole but did not account for the cultural nuances that exist within ethnic groups. A more culture-specific study by Cavanagh et al. (2014) consisted of implementing a program called Culture of Care. The program was implemented in a high school in Denver, Colorado, with a high population of Latino students. Culture of Care was implemented as a response to school conflict and wrongdoing. While all of the students in the research were Latinos, not all were Spanish-speaking ELs. Rubin (2014) examined social interactions of Latino students and found increased engagement might mitigate the possibility of students entering the school-to-prison pipeline. Rubin emphasized the need for students to build relationships with peers to establish a support system. Acosta et al. (2016), in their research on randomized trials of restorative practices, stated an area for further research is in evaluation studies of more culturally specific restorative practices.

The need to be more culturally specific, as opposed to monolithic, for the Latino population should be considered due to the group's diversity. Hong and You (2012) explored Latino students and their academic growth and concluded one challenge for educators in addressing the needs of Latinos is the culturally and linguistically diverse characteristics of the group. In a study of Latinos and language acceptance, Sanchez et al. (2012) reported 50% of Latinos who live in the United States stop speaking Spanish fluently due to acculturation by the third generation, but at any given time, nearly 80% of Latinos in the United States speak Spanish fluently (Sanchez et al., 2012). Sanchez et al. also reported Latinos' Spanish proficiency is a predictor of social acceptance. Therefore, this study was culturally specific in exploring the lessons school leaders learned from implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs.

Implementing Restorative Practices in Schools

Implementing restorative practices in schools goes against traditional forms of punitive discipline that have permeated education for decades. As zero-tolerance policies are not effective, Gregory et al. (2016) suggested schools should rethink how to prevent conflict, effectively address infractions, and re-engage students after disciplinary issues. Lieberman and Katz (2017) evaluated the first-year implementation of restorative practices in Rhode Island schools and found implementing restorative practices often led to changes in school culture. When organizational leaders introduce initiatives that require changes in school culture, Lieberman and Katz suggested implementing ongoing professional development to allow staff members to continue to learn the approach.

Mayworm et al. (2016) explored how teachers should receive ongoing support with restorative practices. Professional development on restorative practices is important for teachers because teachers may not have received adequate training in classroom management and, more specifically, management strategies used in restorative practices (Mayworm et al., 2016). Another component of restorative practices implementation is the need for buy-in from stakeholders. If there is buy-in, stakeholders are more likely to support an initiative they want to see implemented at their schools. The implementation of restorative practices should be part of a comprehensive plan, but it also needs to have a strategic effort so that there is a greater success rate in implementation.

A strategic effort may increase a school's success in restorative practices implementation. Blanchard (2010) identified three reasons for a 70% fail rate for initiatives in organizations: (a) leaders may think that simply announcing a new initiation is sufficient for successful implementation; (b) concerns have not been adequately

expressed or addressed; and (c) those who are part of the change have not been involved in the process.

Blood and Thorsborne (2006) explored how school leaders could apply change management theory to aid in the implementation of restorative practices. They suggested five stages of implementation for restorative practices to avoid failure and improve the chances of success: (a) gaining commitment, (b) developing a shared vision, (c) developing responsive and effective practice, (d) developing a whole school approach, and (e) fostering professional relationships.

Pavelka (2013) outlined essential components for successful implementation of restorative practices in schools: (a) building collaboration among staff members and the student body, so there is a vested interest, (b) creating a school culture of accepting and inclusion of restorative practices, (c) establishing a volunteer base to provide services, (d) providing a continuum of restorative practices services between elementary, middle and high school feeder schools, and (e) creating restorative practices policies for schools. Pavelka (2013) asserted successful implementation is dependent on five program aspects: (a) fidelity, (b) dosage (duration), (c) quality of delivery, (d) student participation, and (e) program differentiation.

When applying Blood and Thorsborne's (2006) five stages along with Pavelka's (2013) essential components, schools may be successful in implementation. Restorative practices represent a change from the status quo of addressing discipline, and they involve a shift in school culture and philosophy of addressing wrongdoing. As a result, schools may find a comprehensive plan and strategic effort may be appropriate.

Leadership

The definition of leadership has changed through the years. In a book on leadership styles, Northouse (2016) explained how the definition of the term *leadership*, has been influenced by world affairs, politics, generational differences, and specific perspectives in a leadership context, among other things. With these many influences, there is no consensus on a single definition for leadership. Despite this lack of a clear definition, Northouse (2016) identified the following components as key to understanding the nature of leadership: (a) leadership is a process; (b) leadership involves influence; (c) leadership occurs in groups; and (d) leadership involves common goals. From these components, a general definition of leadership emerges as the "process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2016, p. 6).

The complexity of leadership has resulted in many approaches to describing and defining the term. Lussier and Achua (2016) described leadership as having five key elements: (a) influence, (b) organizational objectives, (c) people, (d) change, and (e) a formal group of leaders-followers. When these elements are combined, leadership can be defined as the influencing process between leaders and followers to achieve organizational objectives through change.

Maxwell (2007) codified responsibilities of leaders by describing 21 leadership laws that can be implemented to demonstrate leadership qualities. Maxwell grouped these laws into the areas of (a) influence, (b) process, (c) collaboration and connections, and (d) effectiveness. Maxwell did not identify a specific leadership style and believed the laws could be applied to different leadership styles. Maxwell encouraged leaders to know and

practice all laws well and acknowledged leaders are not equally competent in all areas. Maxwell suggested building leadership teams that address leadership weaknesses through collaborative efforts.

Northouse (2016), Lussier and Achua (2016), and Maxwell's (2007) definitions of leadership reflect a general consensus about the nature of leadership. Although these authors defined leadership using different terms, analysis of the definitions reveals similarities. A combination of Northouse's (2016) components, Lussier and Achua's (2016) elements, and Maxwell's (2007) qualities can be used to define leadership as a process that influences followers through collaboration leading to common objectives.

Leadership Aspects of Implementing Restorative Practices in Schools

School leaders have the responsibility to make productive decisions that can positively influence teachers and programs. The school accountability movement and increased public scrutiny of education have led to practices such as high-stakes testing. School leaders should have a clear leadership approach to implement their full range of duties. Salend (2016) emphasized school leaders are responsible for enhancing students' engagement and achievement through their leadership. School initiatives and programs are at times complex and need appropriate planning and leadership. A restorative practices initiative at a school should be implemented with a leadership approach congruent with the nature of the program due to its philosophy and the complex nature of transforming a school's culture. Through this study, an exploration was conducted of how transformational leadership and distributed leadership can be options for school leaders implementing restorative practices initiatives. Situational leadership was also explored, due to the approach of aligning a leader's style with the developmental needs of the

followers, although its application is more widely implemented outside of educational leadership.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is an approach that has been growing in popularity in the field of education. Bass and Raggio (2006) reported the growing popularity of transformational leadership might be the result of an emphasis on intrinsic motivation and follower development, a need in many work groups. In education, schools are organized with committees and composed of teachers and staff members who require inspiration and guidance for their decision-making. When school committees have transformational leaders, they become part of processes where individuals are changed.

The process for the transformation in people manifests itself in different ways. Burns (1978) described transformational leadership as a process through which a leader engages with followers and creates connections. Engagement from a leader increases the intrinsic motivation of followers, thus leading toward maximum potential. Burns (1978) explained:

> The transforming leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. But, beyond that, the transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may covert leaders into moral agents. (p. 4)

Followers who are transformationally transformed are productive and subsequently work well with organizational leaders. In schools, developing teachers who are self-motivated

by having their needs met and building positive leader-follower relationships can lead to higher productivity. Transformational leadership may provide an effective approach for school leaders to consider when implementing restorative practices initiative.

Implementation of restorative practices requires appropriate leadership guidance. Lieberman and Katz (2017) described implementation as consisting of three levels: (a) developing a schoolwide restorative climate with training on building relationships and adopting restorative vocabulary; (b) using trained staff for behavior management and circles; and (c) using trained staff for restorative practices agreements involving more serious offenses, which may require re-entry into the classroom. Implementation of restorative practices involves a comprehensive school-wide initiative and requires a leadership style that guides stakeholders toward successful implementation.

Bass (1985, as cited in Northouse, 2016) described an expanded version of transformational leadership that consists of four essential factors: (a) idealized influence—leaders who are strong role models, create trust, and possess senses of mission; (b) inspirational motivation—leaders who motivate staff commitment beyond self-interests; (c) intellectual stimulation—leaders who stimulate staff to be innovative and creative while challenging themselves; and (d) individualized consideration—how leaders listen and support individual needs of staff. School leaders should consider this leadership style when identifying strategies needed to implement restorative practices successfully.

Transformational Leadership in Schools

The use of transformational leadership by school leaders has shown promising results in school management. Researchers have examined the efficacy of

transformational leaders in school leadership positions. In a meta-analytic review of 79 studies on transformational leadership and its application in school organizations and with teachers and students, Leithwood and Sun (2012) found transformational leaders had moderate positive effects on school conditions and teachers and a smaller influence on student achievement. Leithwood and Sun concluded transformational leadership had the largest effects on improved direction setting, achieving shared goals, and peer cohesiveness in the schools' teacher community. Transformational leadership can have an impact on teachers, who can have a positve impact on school conditions (Leithwood and Sun, 2012).

The relationship between leadership practices and transformational leadership has been explored in other research. Fullan (2007) described three categories of transformational school leadership, each of which consists of leadership practices consistent with those described by Leithwood and Sun (2012). In the setting directions category, school vision, developing goals, and priorities are addressed. The category of developing people addresses the stimulation, individualized support, and modeling of school practices and values. The final category, redesigning the organization, pertains to creating a school culture, fostering participation, and creating community. The research on transformational leadership and how it can be used to address school management provides schools leaders with one suitable approach.

Transformational leadership may be an appropriate approach for teamwork. Anderson and Sun (2017) reviewed transformational leadership and reported its significance in a meta-analytic research study. The results indicated transformational leadership is strongly related to team performance. Teams do well when they have a

transformational leader who provides charisma, motivation, intellectual stimulation, and consideration. These findings demonstrate the relationship between transformational leadership and teamwork, providing school leaders with a leadership approach that may be suitable in schools. When teams work together under guidance of a transformational leader, they may experience higher job satisfaction, increased satisfaction with the leader, a greater desire to be productive, and deeper commitment. An initiative such as restorative practices may benefit from leaders who possess transformational leadership traits that empower and nurture followers.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Transformational Leadership

School leaders should consider advantages and disadvantages of transformational leadership. It may be helpful for school leaders to know how and when transformational leadership should and should not be applied. Due to the complexity of school leadership and management, school leaders need to consider the compatibility between transformational leadership and restorative practices initiatives they seek to implement. The popularity of transformational leadership has provided researchers opportunities to examine it and validate its effectiveness. One advantage of transformational leadership is the breadth of research on its use and its growing popularity in diverse fields such as management, social psychology, nursing, education, and industrial engineering (Northouse, 2016).

Transformational leadership is prevalent in education. A characteristic of transformational leadership is a leader's advocacy for change (Northouse, 2016). When school leaders seek to create change inspired by a clear vision, teachers can be motivated with a clear sense of the school's direction. Opportunities for change through

inspirational vision motivate followers (Lussier & Achua, 2016). In education, a significant increase in transformational leadership research has provided evidence of its suitability for school principals to adopt for school organizations to promote positive student outcomes (Fullan, 2007). The characteristics and popularity of transformational leadership make it a viable option for school leaders.

One criticism of transformational leadership is leadership in this model is viewed as the result of natural personality traits (Northouse, 2016). Conceptualizing leadership as the result of personality traits is problematic because of the challenge of attempting to change an innate trait. Allemand and Fluckiger (2017) examined the effectiveness of intervention efforts to change personality traits intentionally. They found directly targeting specific traits requires powerful interventions because patterns of thought, feelings, and behaviors are deeply ingrained, and intentional actions to change traits are very difficult to do successfully. They suggested targeting behaviors, rather than innate traits, may be more successful.

Another criticism of transformational leadership is ambiguity about who determines the direction of an organization. In transformational leadership, it is not clear who decides what a new vision will be or how followers challenge leaders when there is a lack of clarity on the visions (Northouse, 2016). In school settings, this ambiguity creates challenges for teachers and school administrators because it can lead to diverse individual interpretations. When ideas and understandings are left for individual interpretation, negative outcomes in the form of stalled progress and incompetence can arise.

Transformational Leadership and Restorative Practices

There is a lack of research on implementing restorative practices through transformational leadership, but a closer look at the attributes of transformational leadership may be helpful for restorative practices implementation. One challenge of restorative practices implementation is it is different from traditional, punitive methods of addressing disciplinary issues in schools. Addressing disciplinary issues in a different way creates a challenge for school leaders because restorative practices require a cultural and philosophical change in a school's culture (Lieberman & Katz, 2017); however, transformational leadership is an approach that can be used effectively by leaders to change the status quo by creating a compelling vision for followers (Lussier & Achua, 2016). In schools, transformational leaders can create a new vision for addressing discipline through restorative practices, building on the idea the most vulnerable and neediest students would have their social and emotional needs met. When these students have their social and emotional needs met, they are more likely to achieve optimal conditions for learning, and the potential for involvement in the school-to-prison pipeline may be ameliorated.

Another challenge of restorative practices is due to its recent emergence in the field of education, many teachers do not fully understand its effects. This lack of knowledge creates a challenge for administrators because it means there is a wide range of learning needs among teachers regarding the philosophy and application of restorative practices. Transformational leadership may be useful in addressing the wide range of teacher needs because it places emphasis on followers' needs (Northouse, 2016). When

followers' needs are emphasized, individual levels of development and knowledge may be better addressed.

Distributed Leadership

Leadership in schools is not always about the leadership traits of a single person or persons; it is also about how leaders implement initiatives. Changing educational environments present new challenges for school administrators. These challenges vary in scope and are not limited to school policy or curriculum, two important aspects that school leaders must address. It is important for school leaders to work together with teachers and staff to create collaboration in implementing new initiatives. Lynch (2012) analyzed various leadership approaches in schools and found before the 1960s, schools were typically operated as top-down organizations. Most schools had a principal who gave commands to teachers with little or no input.

Over time, scholars have recommended an improvement in communication skills and input from all stakeholders. Distributed leadership is an approach that provides a framework for leaders to create collaboration by distributing leadership across people in an organization. When leadership is distributed, there is more collaboration and people are more likely to be involved in implementing change. Distributed leadership can been seen as a practical framework for demands on schools.

Distributed Leadership in Schools

The number of tasks a school administrator addresses during a day is a constant challenge. Distributed leadership provides opportunities for a wide range of activities and interactions to be led by people throughout the organization (Lynch, 2012). In examining distributed leadership in an educational setting, Harris (2008) found distributed

leadership has been used to restructure new teams and teacher responsibilities. Distributed leadership allows for multiple interactions in a school. Assigning various tasks to teams leads to a leadership model that is inclusive and relies on members as a unit to work together (DeFlaminis et al., 2016). When school leaders create new teams with leadership responsibilities, the tasks typically conducted in a traditional top-down form of management are delegated to others. According to Harris (2008), the creation of groups with responsibilities and delegated tasks address several things that make an organization efficient: (a) the competence of staff, (b) the implementation and use of initiatives, (c) a shared understanding, (d) collective tasks in groups, and (e) increased coordination. School leaders who implement distributed leadership can create teams that may address school governance, program implementation, and sustainability.

Moving away from top-down leadership to a distributed approach is linked to program sustainability. Hauge et al. (2014) examined how school leaders implemented professional development. They concluded a distributed leadership model supports change and promotes sustainability due to a mutual and reciprocal change in the relationships among teachers. The emphasis on relationships may be an effective method to promote sustainability when an administrator leaves because leadership has been shared among teams. When a school administrator leaves, there is usually a void and initiatives may not continue if there is not a leadership model that provides an impetus for those initiatives to continue. Distributed leadership, with tasks delegated to individuals and teams, may provide a robust framework for leadership sustainability in schools.

Advantages and Challenges with Distributed Leadership

Understanding advantages and challenges of distributed leadership is vital for school leaders. School administrators and leaders are often challenged with choosing appropriate models of leadership or a combination of traits. The extensive list of options may leave many administrators perplexed and confused as to what is best. In some cases, school administrators implement promising school programs and initiatives, only to see them fail. Knowing advantages and challenges of distributed leadership may be helpful for school leaders.

Distributed leadership may be used by some school leaders as an approach to implement change for specific reasons. In their research on distributing leadership in middle-level schools, Grenda and Hackmann (2014) found an advantage of distributed leadership is it empowers school groups and promotes democratic governance. When empowerment and democracy happen in schools, more teachers can participate in an implementation process where voices of stakeholders are heard. School leaders leaders who maintain a culture of empowerment and democracy also provide opportunities for teachers to have ownership in the implementation of an initiative.

Another advantage of distributed leadership is how well it fits into what DeFlaminis et al. (2016) referred to as the black box of educational leadership. The *black box* refers to policies, practices, and procedures that provide an understanding of an initiative. When initiatives fail, it can be the result of poor planning and a lack of understanding the effectiveness of an initiative at any point in time. In a school where distributed leadership is used, the black box would contain policies, procedures, and a leadership framework to create desired outcomes. Leaders would be involved in creating

teams to carry out contents of the black box and oversee implementation. Because of the reliance on teams, distributed leadership provides transparency. When teachers are part of teams that work toward the implementation of a program, opportunities exist for people to be part of a democratic process that generates input and knowledge.

While some researchers have argued distributing leadership is more advantageous than depending on one individual, others have disagreed. Lynch (2012) described how distributing leadership might be risky if implemented among many people. Timperley (2005) argued distributed leadership is only a desirable if there is competence in the leadership groups and outcomes are positive for students. Timperley stated another challenge is choosing the right people for groups, arguing people with expertise should be included, even if they are not necessarily the most acceptable group members among colleagues. In schools with groups not formed around expertise, opportunities for less effective outcomes is a possibility.

Distributed Leadership and Restorative Practices

Restorative practices require an appropriate leadership approach due to the philosophy and alternate form of addressing status quo forms of discipline deeply rooted in schools and society. When schools adopt a restorative practices initiative, they make changes to school cultures in how they address discipline. Changing a school's culture is one of the most challenging tasks for a school administrator. School structures and status quo cultures can be inflexible and resistant to new initiatives (Harris, 2008). Saphier and King (1985) identified necessary elements to change the culture in schools: (a) a collective vision, (b) trust, (c) support, (d) reaching out to knowledgeable teachers, (e) communication, and (f) stakeholders being part of the decision-making process. When

these qualities are present, the capacity of a school to undergo a significant change can increase. These qualities may be achieved by implementing a distributed leadership framework.

Changing a school's culture by implementing restorative practices requires an understanding of how to implement and support school staff during the process. Harris (2008) stated successful implementation of restorative practices involves the use of broad-based leadership that requires many people to come together. School leaders who implement distributed leadership bring people together to work on a common goal in teams where they create a collective vision. Teachers are also involved in the decision-making process by communicating in their groups. All of these qualities of distributed leadership make it an attractive framework for school leaders who want to implement restorative practices.

Situational Leadership

Differentiation in schools takes place in different areas due to the needs of individuals. School leaders and experts have realized because students have different needs, alternative approaches that are not uniform must be implemented. Classroom teachers have differentiated their instruction to meet varying needs of students, rather than prescribing the same teaching practices and materials for all students. By this same logic, school leaders, when implementing initiatives such as restorative practices, should consider the varied needs of their teachers. One approach that allows differentiation is situational leadership.

Blanchard and Hall (2010) described situational leadership as a leadership approach that requires leaders to adapt their leadership styles to needs of followers. The

situational leadership model has four levels of development, each with its own leadership approach. The highly committed beginner, low on competence, requires a directive approach. The lowly committed followers, with some competence, require a coaching approach. Those with variable commitment, but with moderate to high competence, require supportive leadership. Delegating is for followers who are highly committed and highly competent. Through these leadership approaches, leaders can implement a style that is appropriate. A challenge for situational leadership leaders may be measuring the needs of the followers accurately to fit the leadership style.

A leader who uses the situational leadership approach must correctly identify the needs of the followers. Thompson and Glaso (2015) asserted one challenge of situational leadership is calibrating the leader style based on needs. Leaders can be either subjective or objective in their approach to identifying needs of followers. A lack of clarity on subjectivity or objectivity creates challenges for leaders in educational contexts, where there is limited research on situational leadership. One challenge for school leaders is the need to be proficient in creating instruments that correctly identify needs of followers. If school leaders are not proficient, their analysis of followers' needs may be inaccurate. Choosing indices that provide the information to place followers with the appropriate leader style appropriately may be challenging for some school leaders. The lack of research on situational leadership in schools may put school leaders at a disadvantage when trying to implement restorative practices in a school due to the lack of scholarly support. Wright (2017) asserted situational leadership is popular in the business world, particularly in Western countries, because of the quantity of research in the field.

Summary

This chapter included an introduction and background on the issue of school discipline and the impact of policies and practices on particular student groups, namely ELs. Restorative practices provide a promising approach that helps mitigate the detrimental effects of school discipline. A literature review of restorative practices with ELs highlighted the history of restorative practices and how school leaders have considered implementation. The need to address the academic and the social and emotional needs of specific cultural groups, namely Spanish-speaking ELs, is evident when looking at the achievement gap of this demographic (Fenner, 2014; McCloud, 2015; Wright, 2017). Several researchers have highlighted positive effects restorative practices can have. Students whose strengths lie in social and emotional skills are more likely to be academically successful than students without social and emotional skills (Dresser, 2012; Yeager, 2017). In addition to understanding the needs of Spanish-speaking ELs, an evaluation of appropriate leadership styles to implement restorative practices, due to their unique form as alternatives to addressing behavior, should be considered. Information about restorative practices and SEL, and how can be used to address needs of Spanish-speaking ELs, was clarified. The effectiveness of restorative practices with ELs was examined, with attention given to academic rigor and social and emotional needs of students.

The success of restorative practices programs is dependent on how school leaders use leadership for implementation. School leaders are responsible for improving student engagement and achievement through culturally responsive research and instructional strategies (Salend, 2016). A review of the literature on transformational leadership,

distributed leadership, and situational leadership, as approaches to school leadership, was described. Each leadership approach was reviewed and discussed in relation to the implementation of restorative practices.

Research literature on restorative practices and Spanish-speaking ELs was also highlighted. While there is a significant amount of research on restorative practices and minority students, and specifically Latinos, there is a gap in the research with restorative practices when applied to more culturally specific groups, such as Spanish-speaking ELs. Culturally specific restorative practices is an area that requires more research due to the significant size of this demographic (Acosta et al., 2016). The methodology for this case study will be explained in the next chapter with information on research techniques and interviews. Chapter 3 will begin with an introduction into the research methodology, followed by a discussion of the qualitative research method and research design.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

School leaders have become increasingly aware of the value of addressing social and emotional needs of students as a foundation for academic achievement. In research conducted on social-emotional learning programs in schools, Low et al. (2016) stated SEL programs have become popular because they positively influence academic achievement. Restorative practices have become popular in schools to address social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students. Restorative practices have been implemented in schools with large minority student enrollments as an alternative to zero-tolerance policies that exclude students from and push students out of classrooms. This exclusion has led to an increase in the number of Latino and Black students funneled into the school-to-prison pipeline. Although restorative practices have been implemented in schools with large Latino student populations, school leaders have yet to fully understand the full impact of restorative practices in a culturally specific context, such as with Spanish-speaking ELs.

The overall purpose of this study was to understand lessons learned by school leaders who have implemented restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. The significance of this study is found in the potential benefit that current and future school leaders—those who plan to implement restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs—can derive from lessons learned by study participants about the process of implementation. This study contributes to the field of education and educational leadership by helping school leaders and implementation teams understand how schools should plan appropriately to implement restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs.

The specific purpose of this study was to explore the lessons learned by school leaders who implement restorative practices in a middle school with a large number of Spanish-speaking ELs. By understanding the process more fully, school leaders may be able to develop restorative practices implementation programs with greater efficacy. A qualitative case study methodology was used in this research to address the following research questions:

1. What lessons did school leaders learn while implementing restorative practices in a middle school with Spanish-speaking ELs?
2. What lessons did school leaders learn about the social needs of Spanish-speaking ELs?
3. How were transformational leadership and distributed leadership approaches used with restorative practices implementation?

Research Method

A qualitative approach is appropriate for research conducted through interviews, observations, and collected documents (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). A qualitative approach provides a framework for researchers to understand participants and programs through experiences and perspectives. Capturing peoples' perspectives in qualitative research can give meaning to events through which they have lived (Yin, 2016). A goal in qualitative research is a written report to advocate for change, based on the researcher's interpretation of the problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

An exploration was conducted of experiences of school leaders to understand their perspectives. A qualitative case study approach was chosen to answer the research questions. Quantitative research involves experimental and nonexperimental designs,

such as surveys, to yield data to analyze relationships of variables through such approaches as equation modeling, linear modeling, and logistic regression (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the aim was to capture the participants' perspectives of social relationships, making a qualitative case study approach appropriate (Smith, 2018). Researchers in case study research are involved in empirical investigations that use multiple sources of evidence on a contemporary topic (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). In case studies, individuals, organizations, or phenomena are typically the focus. A case study design is suited for examining processes of events, projects, or programs to provide insight into issues (Merriam, 1998).

The data gathered for this study were derived from semistructured interviews, a review of document analyses, and researcher field notes to investigate lessons school leaders learned from implementing restorative practices. Semistructured interviews are suited for case study research because participants can express themselves by providing their perspectives (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). The interview questions, which were grounded in the literature, were open-ended, providing the interviewee flexibility in their responses. The interview questions can be found in Appendix A. Document analysis of restorative practices documents provided data from which codes and categories emerged. Walkthroughs of the school were conducted to identify visual evidence of restorative practices on school walls.

The purpose of the research questions was to uncover lessons school leaders learned when implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. Lessons learned provide information for school leaders to consider when they implement restorative practices initiatives with Spanish-speaking ELs. The analysis was used to

identify lessons learned about leadership approaches used in implementing restorative practices. According to Yin (2018), researchers in case study investigations explore real-world phenomena through interviews, documents, and direct observations.

Research Design

The impetus for this study was to explore lessons school leaders learned about implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs, considering the unique social and emotional needs of ELs. This qualitative case study included interviews with school administrators, counselors, and teachers working at a middle school in a California school district. To answer the research questions, open-ended interview questions, which align with the research questions, were given to participants. As a single-case study design, only one school was examined. Yin (2018), in a book on case study research, described five rationales for single case studies: (a) critical, (b) unusual, (c) common, (d) revelatory, or (e) longitudinal. This case study was designed to be a common case because it captured the circumstances and conditions of school leaders and teachers implementing restorative practices daily. By identifying lessons school leaders learned when implementing restorative practices, other school leaders can make informed decisions about how to best implement restorative practices in schools with Spanish-speaking ELs.

Instruments

According to Hancock and Algozzine (2017), instruments are used to collect information for research questions. Research instruments can be used to generate multiple types of information about the phenomenon being studied. Yin (2018) identified

documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation, and physical artifacts as sources of evidence in a case study research.

The Institutional Review Board at the City University of Seattle provided authorization for the study. The primary form of data collection was semistructured interviews. Secondary methods of data collection included analysis of the school documents related to restorative practices and school walkthroughs of buildings to observe evidence of restorative practices. Yin (2018) recognized the following four principles of data collection for case studies: (a) the use of multiple sources of evidence, (b) creating a case study database, (c) maintaining a chain evidence, and (d) exercising care when using data from social media sources.

Interview questions for this study were constructed and grounded in the literature. Open-ended interview questions were aligned with the three research questions. Seidman (2013) recommended the use of open-ended questions to allow interviewees to take their answers in any direction. Open-ended interview questions were grouped into the following categories: (a) lessons learned by school officials when implementing restorative practices, (b) lessons learned by school leaders about the social and emotional needs of Spanish-speaking ELs, and (c) the presence of evidence of transformational leadership and distributed leadership during the implementation of restorative practices. After obtaining signed consent from participants, interviews were scheduled at the school site. All participants answered all of the interview questions and no clarifications were needed after a review of the transcripts. During the interviews, probing questions were asked when there was a need for further clarification.

Participants

Participants in the study included school leaders and teachers working at a middle school in California. The selection of participants was deliberate and consisted of three focus groups, or data collection units. The deliberate selection of participants is known as purposive sampling, and the goal is to yield relevant and plentiful data on a topic (Yin, 2016). Collection units consisted of school administrators, counselors, and classroom teachers. There were 10 participants. Some participants were recruited with the assistance of personnel in the district's equity department, which implements restorative practices. Other participants were selected from the contact list on the school's website. Participants were all employees of the same school and were involved in implementing restorative practices at organizational and classroom levels.

Participants at the organizational level consisted of school administrators. Teachers and counselors who implemented restorative practices at the school site were also among the participants. In total, participants included three school administrators, three counselors, and four teachers. All participants were enlisted on the first attempt without need for a second. Seidman (2013) and Merriam (1998) noted two criteria for determining the number of participants involved in qualitative research: (a) sufficiency and (b) saturation. With regard to determining sufficiency, a researcher must consider if the range of participants allows others outside the sample an opportunity to connect with the research. The saturation of information is reached at the point when additional participants are no longer required because there is no new information being gathered.

The interviews were conducted in the following sequence: (a) preparation of all materials and audio recording equipment before arriving at the interview site, (b) arrival,

introductions, and asking if there are any questions, (c) discussion of confidentiality, (d) discussion of voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time, (e) conducting the interview using audio recording, (f) conducting further probing questions, as needed, and (g) asking for any final thoughts and finishing the interview.

The confidentiality of the school and the participants was maintained throughout the study. Confidentiality is extremely important, especially when the topic of research may be controversial (Yin, 2018). Because school leaders and teachers are open to criticism due to their actions influencing the lives of students, maintaining confidentiality ensures their protection. Also, pseudonyms were used for all the participants to maintain confidentiality, privacy and as an added safeguard so that they will not be identified by their real names. Each participant was assigned a name based on their gender.

The middle school in this study is in the state of California. The school serves 7th- and 8th-grade students only, atypical of other middle schools that serve 6th through 8th grade. The school was selected using the following criteria: (a) the school has been involved in the implementation of restorative practices and (b) the school has a considerable number Spanish-speaking ELs. Implementation of restorative practices has been occurring at the school for a few years. The EL population of the school, according to the California Department of Education Dashboard (2018), was at 47.5% in 2018, making them a significant portion of the school population.

Procedures

Merriam and Tisdell (2016), in their guide on design and implementation of qualitative research, explained semistructured interview questions allow for flexibility, and they allow interviewees to share their experiences and understanding of a topic or

phenomenon. Contact was first established through email via an email recruitment form (See Appendix B.) Once a participant agreed to be part of the study, they were scheduled to complete a consent form, at which time a date was scheduled for an interview. The average interview session was 54 minutes, which included the setup, introductions, consent, interview, and follow-up questions.

Interviews with participants were conducted at the middle school. Conducting the interviews at the school site provided a natural setting, thereby enhancing realism (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Interviews were digitally audio-recorded and transcribed using a professional transcribing service to ensure accuracy. Ideally, researchers should hire a transcriber to reduce the labor-intensive task of transcribing and to avoid premature judgments (Seidman, 2013). A final task was to provide participants with transcripts of their answers to confirm accuracy and make changes, if necessary.

Semistructured Interviews

One source of data was semistructured interviews. Merriam (1998) described semistructured interviews as being flexibly worded to allow the researcher to respond to information shared during the interview. The researcher is free to probe into responses from interviewees to gather detailed information about participants' experiences (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017).

The interview process always began with an introduction, an explanation of the research, and providing participants with the interview questions (Appendix A) so that they can begin to formulate their answers. After looking them over, it was explained to all of the participants that the interview was going to be recorded and transcribed for accuracy. Participants were reminded of their anonymity, security of the data, and the

option to opt out of the research at any time. The interview questions were asked in the order they appeared in the document. During the interview, some follow-up questions were asked to clarify answers from some participants.

After the interviews were completed, the digital recording was downloaded to a computer and sent to a professional transcribing company via email. After receiving the digital transcribed files, they were downloaded and printed. Each transcript was reviewed for accuracy with the digital recording.

Restorative Practice Document Reviews

Document reviews can yield important information. Hancock and Algozzine (2017) suggested using documents in combination with interviews and observations provides the researcher with diverse sources of data. Selecting appropriate documents relevant to the study should be considered when requesting them. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained in judging documents as potential sources, there is no reason not to use a document for research if it contains information relevant to the research questions and if it can be acquired in a practical manner. Types of restorative practices documents requested were any that were related to implementation, school policy, and parent information. When securing these documents, it was important to ask who used the documents and for what purpose (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

An administrator was asked to secure restorative practices documents. The administrator secured copies of the documents which were then picked up at the school site. A total of two restorative practices documents were obtained from the school for analysis. One of the documents was one page in length and the content was intended for parents with information on restorative practices approaches. The other document was a

multi-page document that is part of a policy manual with content on the policies and procedures of the school. Within the document, there are two pages with content on restorative practices and a protocol of when to use them.

Observations During School Walkthroughs

Another source of data was notes from observational walkthroughs of school buildings to look for evidence of restorative practices. Observing requires paying attention, writing descriptively, and recording observations as field notes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The focus of walkthroughs was on evidence of restorative practices in buildings, such as classrooms, the counseling center, the psychologist's office, the school office, school grounds, and the detention center. Merriam (1998) suggested in observing a school's buildings and rooms for research purposes, the researcher should describe the physical environment and its context, the purpose of the design of the space, and what resources can be found within it.

The walkthroughs were conducted after setting up an appointment to visit the campus. Once on campus, a guided tour was provided by a staff member. Notes were written on a document describing the physical space as well as any words, phrases, or posted written material that alluded to restorative practices.

This case study involved the use of a *systematic observational* method. Systematic observation involves the use of an instrument designed with predetermined categories for making observations (Yin, 2016). The categories were selected from the interview responses to ensure observations focused on relevant data (See Appendix C). Observation is a major means of collecting data. When combined with interviews and document analysis, observation allows for a comprehensive and holistic interpretation of

the phenomenon being explored (Merriam, 1998). The condition of an environment can suggest something about an organization's culture (Yin, 2018).

Data Analysis Methods

Using multiple sources of evidence is one strength of case study research because it allows for triangulation of the data that can converge around a line of inquiry, thereby increasing credibility (Yin, 2018). For this study, sources of data included interviews, policy documents on restorative practices, and researcher notes from observational walkthroughs of the exterior and interior of school buildings for evidence of restorative practices. Using multiple sources of data allows for a comparison and crosschecking of data collected at different times and places and from different people (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Multiple data sources also increase the credibility of a study (Yin, 2018).

The process of data analysis involved an examination of transcripts, documents, and walkthrough observations that were coded and analyzed to allow resulting themes to emerge. Saldaña (2016) described coding as a method of analyzing qualitative data. The code is "a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 4). Analyzing the interview data consisted of (a) reading transcripts for meaning; (b) identifying codes in transcripts; (c) creating patterns or themes; (d) representing findings through figures, graphs, or tables; and (e) interpreting data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). After the interviews were completed, the digital recording was transcribed and analyzed. During the analysis, codes were identified, and themes were eventually formulated. The codes were tracked on a spreadsheet and categories were formulated based on participants' responses. Saldaña (2016) described categories as

explicit words or phrases to describe a segment of data, whereas themes are phrases or sentences with more subtle and tacit processes. Once the categories were created, they were organized into themes based inductive reasoning that went from specific to broad.

For this case study, thematic analysis was applied to the data through guiding research questions and leadership themes extracted from the literature. Braun and Clarke (2013) outlined a six-step process used for data analysis in this study: (a) data were transcribed and ideas for coding emerged leading to initial codes; (b) research questions and literature themes were used to divide the data into small parts; (c) coded data were sorted into overarching themes; (d) themes were connected to create a narrative from perspectives of participants; (e) data were used from overarching themes to provide a narrative to each theme; and (f) findings were reported. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), data analysis is useful and efficient when data bring meaning to the research questions.

The triangulation process involved compiling data from interviews, policy documents on restorative practices, and school walkthroughs to analyze them for convergent findings or areas of divergence. For the policy documents on restorative practices, the analysis process involved coding frequent words and phrases, which were triangulated with data from the interviews and school walkthroughs and then organized into themes.

To increase the privacy and security of the participants, all devices and materials were kept in a locked cabinet. The digital audio recorder, USB drive, and interview transcripts were kept together in a locked cabinet. An *analytic memo* is akin to a researcher's journal, where information about participants and the phenomenon is

recorded (Saldaña, 2016). For this research, a small journal was used to write follow-up questions and answers. The journal was also kept in a locked cabinet while not in use.

Alignment of the Data Collecting Processes

After interviews, documents, and walkthroughs were analyzed, an examination of themes and patterns was conducted. Coding was used with all data gathered. The process involved searching and examining data for frequent words and phrases. After finishing the coding, categories were created based on the similarity of the codes. Once the coding was finalized, categories were created, and themes emerged. A comparison of multiple data sources, along with themes, was analyzed for similarities and patterns. Creswell and Poth (2018), in their book on qualitative case study and research design, stated patterns in case study research are established to provide correspondence between categories for the researcher to study.

Limitations

A robust research design strengthens credibility and helps ensure the researcher's data addresses the research topic (Yin, 2016). Part of a research design is having a strategy to analyze connections between the data being analyzed and the research questions (Yin, 2016). Validity is important in helping ensure that a study has trustworthy findings and was ethically conducted (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Conducting research that is credible and trustworthy is necessary for producing valid results.

A characteristic of good qualitative research is validity. Creswell and Poth (2018) described validation as a researcher's attempt to assess accurately a study's findings. Validation strengthens qualitative research partially due to the amount of time a researcher spends doing fieldwork, creating a study description, and establishing a

relationship with the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) emphasized for qualitative studies to have significance and value, they need to be rigorously conducted, and the researcher's conclusions should be convincing based on the study's details. These details should be comprehensive, and validity needs to be addressed.

There are many approaches for increasing validity in qualitative research, including (a) triangulation and cross-checking of perspectives collected from interviews; (b) member checking through soliciting feedback from interview participants about the accuracy of their answers; (c) rich, thick descriptions; (d) presentation of negative information that does not fit into a code or theme; (e) clarifying research bias; (f) prolonged engagement and observation in the research; (g) peer review of the research; and (h) external audits (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2018) recommended using at least two validation methods in a study. In this study, validation was achieved through triangulation, member checking, rich and thick descriptions, and peer review by the dissertation chair and committee.

Hancock and Algozzine (2017) described limitations as factors that may affect the study and are out of the control of the researcher, while delimitations are boundaries set by the researcher. According to Yin (2016), triangulation is important in qualitative research because it strengthens credibility by checking if multiple data sources converge to the same finding.

One limitation of the study relates to the level of honesty and factuality in responses from participants during interviews because lack of honesty and factuality may skew the data. Although participants were asked questions and given time to formulate

their answers, the honesty and factuality in responses cannot be controlled. To mitigate lack of honesty and increase factual responses, participants were given the open-ended research questions before the interview. Another safeguard taken to increase honesty and factuality was to assure participants of the privacy of their responses in the research study.

Another limitation of the study relates to the participants' mood at the time of the interview, which may have led to erroneous or vague responses. As a way to increase the likelihood that participants were in an ideal mindset, all interviews were conducted at the participants' convenience and at their workplace. Interviews were scheduled at the participants' desired time and workplace in order to cause as little interference as possible in their day.

A final limitation of the study relates to the interview protocol and the questionnaire instrument. Questions were created with potential bias, due to the researcher's experience in the field of education and restorative practices. To mitigate potential bias, participants were asked open-ended questions without presumption of an answer. Open-ended questions allow interviewees to take their answers in any direction they want (Seidman, 2013).

Delimitations

One delimitation of this study was the purposeful sampling used to select school leaders for the study. Groups other than school leaders—such as aides, parents, and office staff—could have been chosen. Another delimitation is the intentional selection of school leaders from a specific school district. A final delimitation is the sample size of 10 participants. Although the sample size was only 10, a cross-section of school staff was

selected to include counselors, teachers, and administrators. While the focus of this research was on a group of school leaders from a specific district and school, other schools that implement restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs may have learned different lessons from their implementations.

Summary

A case study approach was used for this qualitative study. The focus of this study was to explore the lessons school leaders learned when implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. Being culturally specific allows for an understanding of Latinos and restorative practices to emerge due to the group's heterogenous cultural traits and, more specifically in this case, the language differences in the group. While some researchers have offered conclusions on restorative practices and Latinos, more research is needed on the lessons learned by school leaders and teachers when implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs.

All transcripts, interview questions, informed consent forms, school documents on restorative practices, and notes from walkthroughs were stored in a locked cabinet. Digital audio files were downloaded to a USB drive and also stored in a locked cabinet. All the content will be stored for a period of 5 years, after which they will be permanently destroyed. In the published research study, all participants and the school will be unidentifiable.

The research design for this case study was discussed in this chapter. This case study involved the use of research questions, implementation the research design, and internal validation strategies. To gather perspectives of school leaders and teachers, purposive sampling was used to identify participants via e-mail invitations. The

instruments used were semistructured interview questions, document analysis, and school walkthrough notes, which Yin (2018) identified as possible sources of evidence in case study research. The use of semistructured interview questions allowed participants to be authentic in their answers, allowing them to take responses in any direction they desired.

The data analysis involved coding and categorizing words and phrases into themes. In this chapter, limitations and delimitations of the case study were described. Triangulation using multiple sources of data were used to heighten the credibility of the study. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) emphasized cross-checking data allows for a comparison of multiple data points from different perspectives. In Chapter 4, the data analysis process and findings from the study are described, including how data were coded and how the themes emerged.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the lessons learned from implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. Using the lenses of transformational leadership and distributed leadership, this case study will help school administrators and district leaders make decisions about implementing restorative practices in schools with Spanish-speaking ELs. The data collection process included semistructured interviews, restorative practices document reviews, and school walkthroughs. This research resulted in evidence to help answer the following research questions:

1. What lessons did school leaders learn while implementing restorative practices in a middle school with Spanish-speaking ELs?
2. What lessons did school leaders learn about the social needs of Spanish-speaking ELs?
3. How were transformational leadership and distributed leadership approaches used with restorative practices implementation?

This chapter begins with a review of the purpose, the research questions, the research design and methodology, followed by a description of the participants and findings based on the data. The data collection and analysis processes were implemented with the purpose of exploring the lessons learned in the implementation of restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. The findings are presented and organized according to the research questions and reflect the perspectives of the participants. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings that will lead into the discussion presented in Chapter 5.

Methodology

Case study is a methodology that involves the exploration of a lived experience with multiple sources of information such as interviews, documents, and observations (Yin, 2016). The purpose of this research was to explore the lessons that school leaders learned from the implementation of restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. The data from this study focused on 11 interview questions, three school documents related to restorative practices, and two walkthroughs of the school grounds. Documents and notes from the walkthroughs were analyzed and triangulated for similar codes and themes found in the interview data analysis.

The research participants for this study included 10 school leaders: four teachers, three counselors, and three administrators. After obtaining approval from both the school district and the City University Institutional Review Board, participants were purposefully selected and contacted via email. All interviews were conducted in an office on the school campus. Each interview was audio-recorded and sent to a professional company for transcription. Table 4.1 describes participants and their genders and capacities in the school.

Table 4.1

Participant Information

Category	Teachers	Counselors	Administrators
Number	4	3	3
Gender	4 women	3 men	1 man and 3 women

Data Analysis

The data analysis process included the following steps: (a) carefully reading the transcripts, (b) analyzing data to identify codes and themes, (c) representing data through tables, (d) and interpreting data. The coding process involved the organization of data into important and meaningful segments of information (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Interviews were transcribed using a professional transcribing company and were studied individually to identify common words, patterns, and themes. Documents from the school relating to restorative practices were also coded for common words, patterns, and themes. The school walkthrough notes were analyzed following the same process of identifying common words, patterns, and themes. After all three areas of data were analyzed, and a triangulation of the data was conducted to identify points of convergence.

After analysis of the first three transcripts, the identification of repeated patterns led to uncovering an initial set of codes. Repeated words and phrases were used to create codes. This process was applied to each subsequent transcript. After analyzing transcripts for patterns and themes, the restorative practices documents were read and analyzed for themes and patterns. Codes and patterns were organized using a Word document. The final data set included walkthrough observations. There were two walkthroughs where field notes were taken of visual information relating to restorative practices on the walls of campus buildings. Field notes were analyzed for patterns and themes. Once all data sources were analyzed for patterns and themes and organized in a Word document, they were printed and color-coded. Then, all codes and themes were analyzed for points of convergence. Triangulation is an important way of increasing the credibility of a study

(Yin, 2016). The triangulation of the patterns and themes from data led to overarching patterns and themes.

Presentation of Findings

Findings from the analysis of the interview transcripts, documents, and walkthrough observations are presented in this section. From the data analysis, four themes emerged: (a) Parents and School Staff Are Trained with Restorative Practices Education; (b) School Community Is Provided With a Platform for Expression; (c) Restorative Practices Can Be Used to Address Change and Increase Positive Outcomes; and (d) Restorative Practices Implementation is Based on School Philosophy and Committee Work for Sustainability.

In Table 4.2, themes and categories that emerged from the data are highlighted. After a line-by-line analysis of the transcripts, coded responses were placed into conceptual categories, which led to uncovering themes. Codes from documents and school walkthrough notes were also added to the interview transcript data. The data analysis confirmed a triangulation of data between interview question responses, documents, and school walkthroughs. For simplicity and clarity, the following section was divided into categories and emergent themes.

Theme: Restorative Practices Education for Parents and School Staff

The theme Parents and School Staff are Trained with Restorative Practices Education encompassed the categories of *training for staff* and *parent education*. Participants pointed out that during the implementation process, one important component of implementing restorative practices was educating parents and staff on changing mindsets.

Table 4.2

Themes and Categories

Themes	Categories
Parents and School Staff are Trained with Restorative Practices Education	• Training for staff • Parent education
The School Community is Provided With a Platform for Expression	• Voice for all • Perspectives
Restorative Practices Can Be Used to Addresses Challenges and Increase Positive Outcomes	• Increase in attachment with restorative practices • Conflicts as opportunities to problem solve
Restorative Practices Implementation Is Based on School Philosophy and Committee Work for Sustainability	• Support of school philosophy through restorative practices • Restorative practices committee • Motivational and inspirational trainers

The school is in a predominantly Latino, Mexican community, where punitive mindsets, rather than restorative ones, are the norm. Megan, an administrator, said:

> In the Mexicano community . . . a lot of us feel that there has to be a punitive aspect if somebody does something that's not appropriate or harms the community. So we have to talk to our community and say, with research, what we're trying to do.

Training for Staff Members

All participants stated the importance of restorative practices training for faculty to increase awareness and mindset shift. An administrator, Nadia, stated, "The school sent a group of about 18 people from all three sites for the Trainer of Trainers with David at the [County Office] of Education. Then David was gracious to come to our sites." All

site visits included certificated personnel, but at least one school included classified personnel as well.

The training of restorative practices circles was planned to include teachers and staff as part of a weekly experience. Saul, one of the counselors, said, “What we do is we model the circle idea with the teachers. So when we have a meeting, we’ll always have a circle.” School staff devoted part of their professional development time every Friday afternoon for restorative practices circles. The idea was for staff members to model circles and then to incorporate some of those ideas into the classroom.

Through staff trainings, onsite and offsite, school leaders committed themselves to restorative practices and to use them as a means to support the school’s community beliefs: (a) dual language immersion, (b) global perspectives, (c) social justice, and (d) community engagement. Although restorative practices were selected due to their fit with the school’s philosophy, some participants described challenges related to unwillingness to shift mindsets. When asked to identify a challenge of implementing restorative practices at the school, Jeff, a counselor, said, “Teacher buy-in because some teachers don’t feel comfortable. They haven’t been used to this particular way. They’re used to punishment . . . and seeing instant gratification.” Another counselor, Mario said something similar: “A challenge with staff in implementing restorative practices is because we all grew up in a punitive mindset—a very Western approach to discipline. Like, I want to see consequences.” To counter these mindsets, the school continued its staff training on restorative practices.

Parent Education

Most participants mentioned the importance of systematic outreach by school leaders to encourage parents to attend meetings to educate them on restorative practices. Karla, an administrator, said:

> We do have "old school" parents. I have been in particular situations where a parent wants a student kicked out because of something. So we have to educate the parents in saying our school does not practice those kinds of teachings. We don't work like that. We're a restorative school.

Another participant pointed out restorative practices have been challenging for some parents. Diana, a teacher, said "It been hard for some of the parents that we work with on restorative practices." The challenge has come from having punitive based experiences as a response to wrongdoing. Diana also said that:

> The challenge of like, the mindset shift. Sometimes they feel more should be done. And I think that for many people who probably grew up in that system, and the way that they were educated or schooled, it's hard for them to realize we are just going to have a conversation.

The plan to incorporate parent education on restorative practices demonstrates the school leaders' commitment to restorative practices and their belief in educating the community on its approach discipline.

Theme: School Community is Provided with a Platform for Expression

The theme School Community is Provided with a Platform for Expression encompassed the categories of *voice for all* and *perspectives*. All participants made reference to how restorative practices have provided a means for everyone to have a voice. Participants agreed restorative practices have given Spanish-speaking ELs a medium for expression, and the rest of the school body and staff members have experienced this as well. Jeff, one of the counselors, expressed, "Restorative practices allow one to see the human in people and their thinking."

Voice for All

Most of the participants pointed out how restorative practices have given all members of the school community a voice. The voice may be expressed through formal restorative circles or informal community circles in the classroom. One participant described how two siblings were being affected by behavior stemming from the household. The behavior was negatively affecting the siblings, the teacher, and the parents at home. The following statement typifies how restorative practices can provide a voice for all members of the school community. Megan, an administrator, said:

> I remember having circle in Spanish because the mom felt more comfortable and the children were being affected by some inappropriate behavior they were seeing at home. They were able to share. And then we saw an immediate change in the way that they spoke to each other and to the teacher. So emotionally, and socially, and then hopefully academically they have, we've seen their needs being met, because they're able to share openly without anybody judging, without anybody criticizing or any of that.

Carlos, a teacher, reaffirmed how restorative practices provide a medium for expression, saying, "We always say at our school we give students a voice, that our students matter . . . and be successful in the world and be a leader, and so I think that they see their voice has power."

Perspectives

Many participants described how restorative practices provide opportunities for student expression, particularly by allowing students to share their perspectives. Jeff, one of the counselors, stated the following about informal restorative practices circles: "The informal circles are incredible because they form community, give us voice, the right to voice our opinion without being judged." Another participant stated through restorative

practices “you learn more about the actual human, the human being, and their thinking and processing and how they analyze. You get to hear their side of the story.”

When contrasting a punitive approach in a traditional school with the restorative practices at the school site, John, one of the administrators, said:

> We see our perspective, not the perspective of a child. And I think that’s where we hurt children, when we don’t give them the opportunity to reflect on their perspective. But here at this school, we are getting away from that.

The participant’s perspective alluded to a paradigm shift of going from a personal perspective to that of a child. The quote describes the significance of a paradigm shift that is essential during restorative practices implementation.

Theme: Restorative Practices Can Be Used to Address Change and Increase Positive Outcomes

The theme Restorative Practices Implementation Addresses Challenges and Increases Positive Outcomes encompassed the categories of *increase of attachment with restorative practices* and *conflicts as opportunities to problem solve*. Participants repeatedly alluded to restorative practices acting as a conduit for opportunities, where students had a sense of belonging. Participants also pointed out how restorative practices provided a safe place for addressing conflicts.

Increase of Attachment through Restorative Practices

Participants described how, through informal and formal circles, students had a sense of belonging toward the school community. Saul, a counselor, stated the school’s culture, with an emphasis on relationships and a restorative approach

> bestows students with the ability to welcome other students in and be warming. And by doing that, our kids are not alienated. They don't feel that this school isn't the right school for them. They feel that they do belong.

Another participant described how students have left the school and come back because they felt a greater sense of belonging than they would traditionally have at a school that did not emphasize relationships. Gloria, a teacher, stated they have asked students, "Why are you back? Why did you come back? And their answer is always reflective to us: 'Because it's like, well, over there I'm just a number. Here you really know me.'"

John, an administrator, explained they believed restorative practices increased the students' sense of belonging, but he also alluded to the importance of having asked the students during the process to confirm. When asked about restorative practices leading to an increase in attachment and belonging to the school, they said, "I want to believe that, yes. I wish we had asked students that question when we started. Like if they feel more connected. From the students' perspective." John went on to say:

> I think generally yes. But how do you know. I think that there's probably some work to be done there. Like how do you know that that's actually the case. But I think generally, as you walk around, as you talk to students, as you see circles in action, as you think about the classrooms being community oriented, I would think that generally most of our kids would say that feel like they belong.

The sentiment from the participant is that there is a general belief from anecdotal observations that students have increased their connection to the school, but additional work needs to be done to confirm this general belief.

Conflicts as Opportunities to Problem Solve

Most participants agreed restorative practices provide opportunities to solve problems involving student-related issues. Opportunities for problem-solving involved

the practice of using circles to restore relationships. Megan, an administrator, described how circles had provided opportunities for reflection on an incident. She said:

> I think restorative practices circles have been positive. I was involved in a circle at one point, where this student was not willing to, or wanting to, restore. He didn't want to take responsibility for the actions. This has only happened once. The other times, it's been great. The kids have been able to reflect, and the kids have walked out feeling positive about the restorative circle.

In this case, the sentiment expressed by the participant is that in a restorative practice circle, a student was allowed to reflect on their actions leading to a positive feeling about their actions.

John, an administrator, described a time when a student was selling illegal materials on campus to earn money. In the circle, the student asked for forgiveness for what they brought to school and for lying to their parents. He said:

> The child lied to the parents. About all of that. And it came out in the circle. It just came out in the circle where the child was like, 'I can't lie to you anymore. I need to like, let it go.' It was powerful. Where we saw that this bond that the parents thought they had with the child, they thought they had this child, they thought the child was honest with them. When they head their child be truthful and ask for forgiveness. It was extremely powerful. This child was trying to save money. He learned a lot of lessons within 45 minutes.

In addition to restoring the relationship with the parents, the child was also able to focus on academic work. The participant said, "His grades went up. He wasn't—the diversion wasn't there anymore about the money. And the hiding it from parents. He focused on school and his grades went up."

Consistency and exposure to restorative practices was also noted as key for students to seek circles as a viable option for problem-solving. Melissa, a teacher, stated, "Once students know more about this type of practice, they want to solve problems in this type of setting. Because they know it works."

Theme: Restorative Practices Implementation is Based on School Philosophy and Committee Work for Sustainability

The theme Restorative Practices Implementation is Based on School Philosophy and Committee Work for Sustainability encompassed the categories of *support of school philosophy through restorative practices* and *restorative practices committee and motivation and inspirational trainers*. Participants described how restorative practices duties are delegated across a group of staff who had been formally trained in restorative practices. This group was involved in restorative practices support for staff, professional development, and parent workshops. Participants also shared how the school had received training from trainers who were motivational and inspirational in their delivery of professional development to staff members.

Restorative Practices Support School Philosophy

The majority of participants described the school's philosophy based on four principles and how restorative practices are in alignment with them. When asked about why the school decided to pursue restorative practices, John, one of the administrators, said, "It's like a puzzle piece. Restorative practices fit the school's philosophy. They both go together. This school is built on the foundation of community." Another participant said, "This school is very humanistic, and this kind of approach of how to solve problems with restorative practices is a very humane kind of approach. It wasn't because there was an overwhelming need due to behavior problems."

Megan, an administrator, described how restorative practices were chosen because they promoted qualities that support one of the school's principles. She said:

> Several years ago, since one of our pillars is social justice, in many of our conversations as a leadership team, we discussed discipline and kind of behavior

> management, and what we are doing as a school as it relates to social justice. And that kind of prompted us to think about then, if we're trying to create students that are advocating for human rights and being activists, then we need a behavior policy, a way of interacting with students that is social justice driven, and so we landed on restorative practices.

The participant described the thinking of how restorative practices aligned with the school's culture related to social justice. The alignment made school leaders realize that restorative practices were a good fit for the school.

Restorative Practices Committee

All participants described how a core group of people had been involved in staff support, professional development, and parent workshops. It is unclear if this group had been a formal or informal committee. The group consisted of counselors, a psychologist, resource teachers, and administrators. Saul, one of the counselors, stated, "A few of us came together to kind of have a committee, that meets periodically, and they've done some [professional development] with the staff, and we've done work with parents." John, one of the administrators, stated, "We do have a group of people. It's a couple of individuals from every site. Basically, people that went to the trainings. We have teachers too; we believe it's important to have teacher buy-in." John described how restorative practices were modified to meet the needs of the school and its importance. He stated:

> We also developed a restorative justice committee . . . and we take apart, we discuss a lot of issues, and how we can modify it, how we can kind of make it relevant to our own community. Because restorative practices is very, very general, and I think, based on my experiences, just listening to other educators stories, or my experiences from restorative practices, it sometimes, it doesn't go well with some schools. Because they just don't make it relevant to their own community. It's not culturally relevant.

John explained that at the school, the committee looks for ways to modify restorative practices so that it is cultural relevant to the needs of the school community.

By making restorative practices relevant to the culture of the school, school leaders are increasing the chances of implementation success.

Motivational and Inspirational Trainers

Staff members at the school site have been motivated and inspired in the learning of restorative practices and the school's principles. Gloria said:

> We had a presenter come and do a training in the cafeteria, where Carlos, just basically laid the ground work of a circle, how we share, going over the norms, the importance of respecting voice. He motivated many of us and that's a big factor. It's huge. Especially when you talk to our community.

John said:

> We did a lot of reading from Bettina Love and work with Jeff Duncan Andrade. Those two people really inspired us to look at how we might change and interact with children. [Jeff Duncan Andrade] fueled the fire. He had an impact on our staff.

This participant described two people who were influential and had a positive impact on staff members to motivate them on how they need to interact with children.

Restorative Practice Documents

In addition to the participant interviews, documents about restorative practices developed at the school site were examined. These documents were created for informational purposes and provided a rich source of data for this study. One document included information for parents in English and Spanish using a question-and-answer format designed for parents. A second, more extensive, document provided more detail about restorative practices and was part of school's policies handbook. The parent information document related to the categories *restorative practices increasing attachment* and *conflicts as opportunities to problem solve*. The other document included

information on the categories *voice for all* and *restorative practices support school philosophy*.

The document for parents provided a brief overview for parents to learn more about restorative practices and the objectives of this approach. The document was used as a handout for parents during workshops to provide information about how restorative practices address the need to belong and feel valued by peers and adults in their life. It also provided information about how restorative questions can be used to help resolve conflicts.

The parent workshop document provided information about how students were expected to have an understanding of human rights, and decisions should be made to support safety and human dignity. With community being one principle of the school, the purpose of restorative practices, as outlined in the document, was to restore and build relationships.

The second document contained information about how restorative discipline gives a voice to the person and provides options for problem-solving. When conflicts arose, the document provided students with information about three restorative options to involve adults and peers. The document also served as a guide for staff to know how to address discipline in a restorative approach.

School Walkthroughs

The school walkthroughs involved taking notes and pictures of banners or posters displayed in the halls of the school campus that were geared for student attention. In the walkthroughs, there was no evidence of anything directly related to restorative practices, but there were other things noted in the hallways that support a restorative approach.

Two of the categories supported by data from the walkthrough analysis were *voice for all* and *perspectives*. On one wall of the school building, a poster outlined community agreements for everyone to follow. The agreements alluded to acknowledging others' ideas and being open minded. It also alluded to speaking out and using appropriate language. In one of the school buildings, banners displaying the school's principles were hung. Two banners that complemented restorative principles related to the importance of community and social justice. These two principles were also described by many participants when they explained why restorative practices were selected.

Summary

This chapter contains the findings from interview transcripts, policy documents, and school walkthroughs. The themes that emerged from the data were Restorative Practices Education for Parents and School Staff, School Community Provided with a Platform for Expression, Restorative Practices address Challenges and Increase Positive Outcomes, and Restorative Practices Implementation is Based on School Philosophy and Committee Work for Sustainability. Themes and categories emerged after a line-by-line analysis of all of the interview transcripts, analysis of school documents, and observations during the walkthroughs. An analysis of the data revealed an appropriate fit between the school's philosophy and the principles that support restorative practices.

The next chapter contains descriptions of these findings and how they apply to the problem statement, the research questions, and the current research in the area of restorative practices and leadership. Chapter 5 also contains a discussion of the significance of these findings for school leaders who, in a future time, may be

implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. Recommendations for action and future research are also made.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This study was designed to examine the implementation process of restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs, the social needs of Spanish-speaking ELs at the school site, and the use, if any, of transformational leadership or distributed leadership approaches by school leaders. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the lessons school leaders learned from the implementation of restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. The research questions, based on the literature review, were designed to elicit information on the implementation process, the social needs of Spanish-speaking ELs, and leadership approaches used. This study was guided by the following three research questions:

1. What lessons did school leaders learn while implementing restorative practices in a middle school with Spanish-speaking ELs?
2. What lessons did school leaders learn about the social needs of Spanish-speaking ELs?
3. How were transformational leadership and distributed leadership approaches used with restorative practices implementation?

The findings from this qualitative case study emerged primarily from 10 semistructured interviews conducted with four teachers, three counselors, and three administrators from a middle school located in California. Participants were selected using a purposeful sampling approach. Case study methodology was selected because the research involved a real-life case with multiple sources of data. The coding process was applied to interview data, document reviews, and school walkthrough observations. The following four themes emerged from the analysis: (a) Restorative Practices Education for

Parents and School Staff, (b) School Community Provided with a Platform for Expression, (c) Restorative Practices Addresses Challenges and Increases Positive Outcomes, and (d) Restorative Practices Implementation is Based on School Philosophy and Committee Work for Sustainability.

The subsequent part of this chapter is divided into five key sections pertaining to the lessons school officials learned while implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. These sections are as follows: (a) discussion of the findings and conclusions for each research question with a comparison with the literature, (b) the application of findings and conclusions to the problem statement, (c) application of the findings relating to leadership, (d) recommendations for school leaders and academic research, and (e) a concluding statement.

Discussion of Findings and Conclusions

Three research questions guided the data collection for this study. The responses and conclusions related to each of these questions are based on four themes that emerged from the data analysis process.

Research Question 1

The first research question corresponded to Interview Questions 8, 9, and 10 (see Appendix A), and were asked to participants in order to explore the lessons they learned while implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. These interview questions were designed to identify important challenges and new understandings during the implementation of restorative practices. The data revealed restorative practices education for parents and school staff is important for sustainability. Lynch (2012) researched restorative practices implementation in schools and said due to the shift in a

school's culture, restorative practices implementation requires ongoing training. Training can be extended to all staff members and parents to create capacity in staff and awareness in parents of the approaches and principles of restorative practices.

Training for Staff

Participants indicated professional development opportunities were provided by school leaders as part of the implementation of restorative practices. When describing experiences of professional development, participants alluded to a systematic approach in training staff. John stated, "A group of 18 went through the first phase. Then Carlos came to each site. Now we're in the second phase." Saul expressed gratitude for the school's devotion to providing restorative practices professional development: "I'm proud to be at an institution where they give us professional development, in this area, the restorative practices." Most participants described how school leaders were committed to restorative practices training for all staff members.

Data revealed some challenges in restorative practices implementation. Some participants described how the lack of teacher buy-in and an "old school mentality" of punitive discipline based on zero-tolerance policies hindered smooth implementation. Saul said, "Teacher buy-in is a challenge. The reason why is because some teachers don't feel comfortable. I guess they're used to punishment. They're used to seeing instant gratification." John said, "There have been challenges with the staff. Because they're also, as most of us, we all grew up in a punitive mindset." The buy-in concern in restorative practices implementation is congruent with research by Mayworm et al. (2016), who indicated restorative practices training is critical to increase buy-in from school staff.

One advantage heralded by participants as a positive reception to restorative practices implementation had been the school's philosophy. Many participants described how the school's philosophy and the restorative practices principles complemented and supported each other. Megan said, "This school was built on the foundation of community. Our director built this school on that foundation; he wanted us to work as a community. Restorative practices give us that opportunity to work as a community." Another participant pointed out the humanistic approach of the school staff: "The school is very humanistic and the school and restorative practices is very humane."

In research on restorative justice and community response to implementation in schools, Ryan and Ruddy (2015) said throughout the research on restorative justice, the central theme and philosophy is always community. Because of historical commitment to building community, school leaders have implemented restorative practices more effectively than school leaders in other contexts. Although there was commonality between the school's philosophy and restorative practices, a continuation of professional development in the area of restorative practices could have aided in the sustainability process. Mayworm et al. (2016) concluded it is particularly important for teachers to receive professional development on restorative practices approaches due to inadequate teacher training with restorative approaches.

Parent Education

Participants described how staff of the school were actively involved in parent education in the area of restorative practices. Many participants referred to the school's outreach to parents through symposia on restorative practices education. Educating parents on restorative practices was important for the school to change parent mindsets in

how to address wrongdoing using a restorative approach. Changing parent mindsets is an important component of restorative practices implementation. John said, “We had parents coming to us as the community and saying, ‘Why haven’t you expelled this child? He’s bullying my child. He’s hitting my child.” Carlos said:

> We’ve done things with some parents to help them understand what restorative practices are. By the time they leave the training, they feel a little bit more like they get it. But we do have some old school parents that want students kicked out.

Understanding the need to educate parents on restorative practices is a way that school leaders are laying a foundation for long-term success and sustainability.

One the strengths of the school has been a bilingual approach to parent education in restorative practices. In research on restorative practices implementation in a culturally and linguistically diverse school, Ingraham et al. (2016) concluded one way to increase parent engagement and increase collaboration between the home and school is through bilingual workshops. The school has created parent symposia on restorative practices using handouts in both English and Spanish. For the school in this study, an asset is the bilingual approach to presenting information in the parents’ native language to help parents develop deeper knowledge of restorative practices. If parents have knowledge of restorative practices, there may be greater support of restorative practices due to a shift in the mindset of parents from a punitive to a restorative approach.

Having a Platform for Expression

Participants indicated restorative practices circles have provided members of the school community a voice. Melissa said, “We give students a voice; our students matter. They see that their voice has power.” Carlos said, “Restorative practices allow students the opportunity to tell their side of an issue.” Restorative practices used as a conduit for

expression allows for community building opportunities where teachers and students can have meaningful exchanges to strengthen social connections (Gregory et al., 2016). Participants expressed how restorative practices allowed everyone to speak their perspectives in a safe forum. The data suggest restorative practices were an effective platform for school community expression to address wrongdoing and build relationships.

Research Question 2

The second research question was designed to identify the lessons school leaders learned about the social needs of ELs and was associated with Interview Questions 5, 6, and 7 (see Appendix A). The questions were asked to identify social and emotional needs observed in Spanish-speaking ELs and how leaders have implemented restorative practices to address those needs. The key areas in participants' responses were restorative practices increasing attachment and conflicts viewed as opportunities to problem solve.

Restorative Practices Increasing Attachment

One positive attribute of restorative practices was an increase in perceived student attachment to the school community. Participants observed an overall increase in attachment and sense of belonging among students at the school. Saul said, "With restorative practices, students feel like they belong to a process. They ask about doing circles and talking about things." An increase in attachment and a sense of belonging supports Ryan and Ruddy's (2015) conclusion restorative practices increase student ownership and senses of responsibility by giving students a voice in how issues are addressed, resulting in a greater sense of belonging to the community.

The school in this study is in close proximity to the border between the United States and Mexico. It is common to see new students enrolled in the school from this region. One participant explained Spanish-speaking ELs are at times intimidated in circles because they are not accustomed to having conversations where feelings are discussed. Megan said:

> When we receive students from Mexico, they're not used to so much order. They're not used to talking in circles, the setting, and the questions. We have to help them feel like they belong. After students experience circles, they ask if they can have one to resolve issues.

Saul said:

> Some of our students have issues getting to school on time. We find out that they have to get up at 4:00 in the morning to be at the trolley, to get the bus, to get here. And then some can't access English, so it's hard for some of them. Sometimes it creates a behavioral problem. But we do have circles in their native language to make them feel more comfortable. And that helps.

Although the school has Spanish-speaking ELs with particular challenges related to the proximity of the border, the school's emphasis on dual-language instruction has helped to alleviate some of the social and emotional concerns.

Dual immersion, or dual-language programs, are bilingual programs used to develop the bilingual academic skills of native and nonnative English speakers. The goal of dual immersion is a fully bilingual student body—not just English proficiency. As a result of the emphasis on bilingual proficiency, native and nonnative English speakers are resources for each other. In a study on the social and emotional needs of ELs, Vera et al. (2018) described how dual-immersion programs have the greatest potential for social and emotional benefits. The potential stems from the program's design, where native and nonnative English speakers have their languages valued, and there is cultural appreciation of both groups. Leaders of dual-immersion programs value bilingualism, as opposed to

other bilingual programs, such as early exit or transitional, where the goal is English, and only nonnative English speakers are in the program. The data suggest the school had success in developing a sense of belonging through restorative practices approaches, not only for Spanish-speaking ELs but for all students.

Conflicts as Opportunities to Problem Solve

Participants described how conflicts provided opportunities for problem-solving in the implementation of restorative practices. Problem-solving opportunities consisted of the use of restorative practices circles and restorative language. Gregory et al. (2016), in research on restorative practices in schools, described how circles are used in the framework. Restorative circles provide a forum for students to sit in a circle and address problems. Jeff said, "When an incident happens, they [students] ask to have a circle. They have in their mind how to solve problems." Megan stated something similar, "When incidents happen, we talk about the choices they made. We try to get away from the rule that was broken and discuss it in a circle."

The data presented in Chapter 4 suggests school leaders gave students opportunities to resolve problems restoratively. In addition to addressing conflicts, some participants described how the school community implemented restorative practices in a culturally relevant method with Spanish-speaking students. Saul said:

> Some kids ask if the circle is going to be in English or Spanish, and well, we tell them, it's going to be in Spanish. If they're Spanish speaking, we do it in their language. It helps take away the shyness.

The data suggest school leaders took advantage of conflicts as opportunities to problem solve with a culturally and relevant approach, using restorative practices approaches.

Research Question 3

The third research question was aligned with Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 (see Appendix A). The final research question was designed to explore the degree to which transformational leadership or distributed leadership approaches were used in restorative practices implementation. Three key categories emerged from the analysis of the data: restorative practices support the school philosophy, restorative practices committee, and motivational and inspirational trainers.

Restorative Practices Support the School Philosophy

While there is little research on the relationship between restorative practices implementation and school philosophies, a study by Sandwick et al. (2019) explored how school leaders' philosophies are challenged by the beliefs of restorative practices. In their research, they discovered some school staff were challenged with philosophical issues in restorative practices. Among these challenges was the perceived lack of consequences for students, which diminished complete buy-in from staff.

Although some participants in this study mentioned one challenge was complete buy-in due to philosophical reasons, overall, the acceptance toward restorative practices was positive. One of the reasons may be the compatible fit between the philosophies of the school and restorative practices. The reoccurring theme in the school and restorative practices is community. The community theme is evident in the participants' interview responses, school document analysis, and picture walkthroughs. John said, "We were already aligned doing pedagogies in reference to humanistic development. restorative practices just made it more formal." Megan said, "Restorative practices aligned with the

mission of our school. Like our beliefs." This sentiment suggests a compatible fit, despite challenges, between the school's philosophy and restorative practices.

Restorative Practices Committee

One leadership approach observed in participants' responses was distributed leadership. Lynch (2012) described distributed leadership as an approach to provide opportunities for a wide range of activities to be shared among people. Jeff said, "Some people have come together to have kind of a committee that meets periodically, to do [professional development] with the staff with our restorative practices learning, and work with parents." The formation of a committee allowed school leaders who have been trained in restorative practices the opportunity to extend their learning with other staff members and parents. The formation of committees which provides leaders the opportunity for increased people interactions aligns with Harris's (2008) findings that distributed leadership allows groups to increase staff competence, implement initiatives, increase a implementation with a distributed approach was an effective strategy. The committee is involved with supporting teachers, providing professional development, and educating parents in English and Spanish. shared understanding, and work on collective tasks. The data from this study suggest that restorative practices

Motivational and Inspirational Trainers

Some participants alluded to the trainers as speakers who were motivational and inspirational. John said, "One of the speakers that came was inspirational and helped fuel the fire. He had an impact on our staff." Diana said, "It helps to have someone inspirational, especially when working on changing the mindsets of people about restorative practices." The sentiment of having someone inspirational to motivate people

to change their mindsets aligns with Burns (1978), who stated transformational leadership engages and motivates individuals to a high degree. School leaders and staff at the school that was studied were inspired and had engaged in creating a committee of individuals who provided restorative practices learning opportunities for the school community. The members of the committee, who were also participants in this study, fully supported restorative practices and were passionate about how they change lives.

Participants did not specifically attribute transformational learning traits to principals or administrators, so there was no evidence to conclude administrators incorporated any aspects of transformational learning in their leadership practices. However, some participants described the leadership style of the principal and administrators as equity leadership, cultural leadership, or participatory leadership.

Application of Findings to the Problem Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore lessons learned from the implementation of restorative practices in a middle school with Spanish-speaking ELs. The findings of this study can provide school leaders, policy makers, and interested stakeholders with insights for consideration in future restorative practices implementations, specifically with Spanish-speaking ELs. While much research is available on restorative practices and Latino students, the findings are often generalized and not culture specific. The aim in this study was to collect narratives of school leaders and analyze policy documents and school walkthroughs for evidence of restorative practices.

The findings from this study were organized into four themes. The themes emerged from the interview questions designed to address how transformational learning

and distributed learning approaches were used, what lessons were learned from implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs, and what lessons were learned about the social and emotional needs of Spanish-speaking ELs.

The general problem addressed in this study was that school leaders have not understood the full impact of restorative practices in specific culture contexts, namely, Spanish-speaking ELs. The lack of knowledge and limited research in this area can threaten future restorative practices implementation initiatives, specifically with Spanish-speaking ELs. Without well-done research, restorative practices implementation strategies with culture-specific groups, namely Spanish-speaking ELs, may not be sustainable.

Application to Leadership

The findings address a specific leadership problem: With a growing Spanish-speaking EL population, pressure is placed on school leaders to understand and implement effective leadership practices to meet the needs of students in a restorative practices initiative. Most participants alluded to a distributed leadership approach. The value of distributed leadership was promoted by DeFlaminis et al. (2016), who stated one objective with this type of leadership is the implementation and use of initiatives. Implementation of restorative practices is challenging due to difficulties of attempting to change of a school's culture or, in some cases, mindsets of people. Through distributed leadership, a collective approach can be used to involve more people in leadership responsibilities, in contrast to a single principal or administrator taking the lead alone.

Transformational leadership was another leadership lens used in this study. Bass and Raggio (2006) reported the popularity of transformational leadership may be due to

the emphasis on intrinsic motivation and follower development. All participants described their support for restorative practices, which leads to the conclusion trainers and speakers have created strong follower development. Participants also described trainers and speakers as motivational and inspirational. Leaders who are motivational, inspirational, and increase follower development align with the work of Northouse (2016), who described leaders who use transformational leadership approaches as inspirational and ones who promote intellectual stimulation. With participants stating restorative practices implementation had some challenges due to the difficulty of shifting mindsets, speakers and trainers used for professional development had an impact on school leaders involved in restorative practices.

Although situational leadership was a viable leadership approach considered for this study, due to its emphasis on follower development from a leadership viewpoint, participants in the study did not specifically allude to it in their responses. The frameworks of distributed and transformational leadership were sufficient to implement school-wide restorative practices initiatives. Its absence is worthy of consideration. Because situational leadership promotes the idea of leaders adapting to needs of followers, this approach may be useful for school leaders to consider during an implementation of restorative practices. Exploring restorative practices implementation through a situational leadership lens may be an area for future research.

As restorative practices increase in popularity in schools—and with Spanish-speaking ELs being a significant subgroup in many schools—school leaders should consider appropriate leadership practices during implementation. School leaders need to incorporate decision-making skills, effective communication, and knowledge and

analysis of leadership practices to address emerging trends and policy changes. The emerging trend of restorative practices in schools continues to gain popularity across the United States as one way to address equity issues, help end the school-to-prison pipeline, and decrease the suspension rate of Latino and Black students.

For the leaders of the school in this study, there has been a foundation of distributed leadership practices implemented with restorative practices. Transformational leadership practices were identified among the speakers and trainers of restorative practices; however, it was inconclusive if transformational leadership was a leadership approach used by the administrators. A recommendation plan for this school should include the continuation of the committee to support staff and educate parents on restorative practices. The group should be a formal school committee, consisting of a chairperson who conducts a monthly meeting, sets the agenda and minutes, and implements a shared-decision making process in the group. Each year, the committee could receive new members so that members continue to gain experience in restorative practices and educate others. Through this approach, more school leaders would be influenced, leading to greater sustainability of restorative practices.

Recommendations for Action

Spanish-speaking ELs are significant subgroup of students in the United States, yet they are disproportionately affected and comprise a significant portion of students in the school-to-prison pipeline. School leaders have implemented restorative practices in schools, but there is little guidance or research on how to implement restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. The findings from this study can help address how lessons

learned by the school leaders in this study can be applied to future restorative practices implementations in other settings.

Based on the data and findings from this qualitative case study research, three recommendations for school leaders are suggested for restorative practices implementation with Spanish-speaking ELs: (a) aligning the philosophies of the school and the restorative practices movement, (b) educating parents on restorative practices, and (c) developing a committee as part of a distributed leadership model.

Aligning the Philosophies of the School and the Restorative Practices Movement

The first recommendation for school leaders to consider in future restorative practices initiatives is the alignment of the school's philosophy with that of the restorative practices movement. This recommendation aligns with research from Thorsborne and Blood (2013), who stated one factor to consider in restorative practices implementation is the compatibility of a school's values and restorative practices. The school in this study had an advantage in its restorative practices implementation. Many participants described how the school's philosophy fit well with restorative practices. Thorsborne and Blood (2013) found restorative practices initiatives sometimes fail because of a lack of alignment between the existing system and new processes or initiatives. A failed restorative practice initiative was not the case at the school in this study: Participants pointed out community was one of the four principles upon which the school was founded. Community is also a core value of the restorative practices movement.

Schools that do not have a school philosophy that aligns with restorative practices should work toward aligning their school philosophy with that of restorative practices.

School leaders need to make compelling cases for changing the hearts and minds of counselors, teachers, and staff. The change of hearts should be toward becoming a school that values community and relationships, such as was the case with the school in this study. The school in this study had some challenges with buy-in from the teachers. When the foundation for restorative practices fits well with the culture of the school, successful implementation of restorative practices is more likely to happen.

Once the cultural foundation is created by school leaders, the philosophy and mission of the school needs to be communicated through different channels (Thorsborne and Blood, 2013). School leaders in this study communicated their principles and beliefs through the school website, on school banners displayed on some walls of the school, and in school documents. A benefit of the compatibility of a school's philosophy and the philosophy of restorative practices is implementation that would have more support to sustain a restorative practices initiative over time.

Educating Parents on Restorative Practices

A second recommendation is to have parent workshops on restorative practices in English and Spanish. In an article on empowering Latino parents to transform their child's education, Pstross et al. (2016) stated when parents are educated and given appropriate skills, they can have a transformative impact on their child. Thorsborne and Blood (2013) suggested parent workshops are one way to engrain restorative practices into a school's fabric so that it is part of the culture. By educating parents on restorative practices, parents are better able address their child's social and emotional development (Pstross et al., 2016). The school in this study held several parent workshops on restorative practices. These workshops helped parents become more educated on

restorative practices and better able to address their child's social and emotional needs. The workshops also allowed restorative practices to become woven more deeply into the culture of the school community. Some participants described how parents were involved in workshops and wanted to try some restorative practices approaches at home.

The Development of a Committee as Part of Distributed Leadership Model

One leadership approach that could be used in restorative practices initiatives is the implementation of a committee as part of a distributed leadership model. Participants in this study described how a committee was formed to support staff and provide trainings for parents. The committee collaborated with members of the school and was involved in the implementation of restorative practices. Committee work aligns with Lynch (2012) who described distributed leadership as a practice that provided opportunities for a wide range of activities and interactions to be shared among people. School leaders should consider benefits of distributed leadership, so implementation initiative of restorative practices does not rely fully on administrators. A distributed leadership approach is recommended because, as a school builds the capacity of its staff in the area of restorative practices, such an approach can support change and promote sustainability (Hauge et al., 2014).

A distributed leadership model deviates from top-down leadership, where administrators are the sole source of expertise. Due to the importance of changing a school culture and helping shift the mindsets of people when adopting restorative practices, building a team of people with expertise and interest is recommended. Building teams of experts aligns with the work of Lussier and Achua (2016), who described a distributed leadership group as leaders who take leadership roles based on their area of

expertise or interest. As the capacity and interest for implementing restorative practices increases among school staff, membership in the committee can expand and operate on a rotational basis. The rotation, along with the continuation of a restorative practices committee, would promote sustainability for the initiative.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings from this study confirmed the importance of having a school philosophy compatible with restorative practices and parent education. A review of the literature helped reinforce the idea that using a distributed leadership model is important when implementing restorative practices. The effectiveness of a distributed leadership approach when implementing restorative practices was confirmed in this study. To extend the learning about the implementation of restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs, future researchers can focus on how different sets of stakeholders experience restorative practices as well as how other social constructs intersect with the restorative practices.

One area for further research is exploring the parents' and students' perspectives. Parents play a critical part in education of their children and are often key figures in their academic outcomes. A study which centers on the experience of parents may reveal additional insight into how restorative practices are viewed from the family perspective. Similarly, learning how students react to restorative practices is another area that future researchers can explore. The students' perspective can provide valuable insight on how they perceive restorative practices are addressing their needs, especially in light of school discipline.

In the participants' responses, none of them alluded to the use of situational leadership during the implementation of restorative practices. A future study could explore restorative practices using only a situational leadership lens. In such a study, future researchers would address how school leaders acknowledge and utilize the range of teacher and staff abilities in implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. With school administrators focused on the academic achievement of children, differentiating training to meet the needs and skill levels of teachers and staff may provide better outcomes for students. Research on situational leadership may also provide school leaders with another viable leadership approach in the implementation of restorative practices.

Another area of for future research is exploring how race impacts restorative practices implementation. The dynamic of race provides future researchers with a different construct and opportunity to explore how stereotypes and implicit bias present themselves in schools. Focusing on staff, students, and parents may provide school leaders with research on how restorative practices components may help in addressing stereotypes and implicit bias.

Inclusion programs are another aspect of restorative practice implementation that future researchers can explore. In this study, school leaders implemented a dual-language bilingual program that promotes inclusivity because it integrates English-only and ELs into the same classroom with the goal of learning English and another foreign language. Less inclusive programs, such as transitional bilingual, in which all ELs in the program form a single cohort without English-only students would be worth studying due to the language dynamic. In such programs, with Spanish speakers, Spanish-speaking and

English-only students do not rely on each other for language learning purposes. School leaders may benefit from understanding how different bilingual programs influence relationships and the implementation of restorative practices.

Finally, future researchers can examine the concept of restorative practices with different language groups. While this study focused on restorative practices with one language group, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Arabic are other widely spoken languages that students use in our nation's schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Replicating this study with English learners who speak Chinese, Vietnamese, and Arabic can provide schools leaders with more culture-specific research on other populations of ELs. By examining specific language groups, future researchers can help school leaders understand the unique cultural identities of students and how their specific language and cultural values integrate with a restorative practices approach in schools.

Concluding Statement

This dissertation contains the lessons learned from implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking ELs. Based on findings from this study and review of the literature, aligning a school's philosophy with restorative practices is recommended to mitigate the effects of a school culture change. Educating parents on restorative practices is important to help shift mindsets about addressing wrongdoing in the school. Parent education is especially important because, when schools implement restorative practices, one of the objectives is to decrease school suspensions and address the wrongdoing in the school. For restorative practices, a distributed leadership approach is viable because it allows people with expertise and interest in restorative practices to take part in the implementation process. The creation of a committee allows an administrator to have a

knowledgeable group of individuals assume leadership for professional development for staff and parent education.

The increase in the number of Spanish-speaking ELs in the United States requires policymakers and school leaders to make informed decisions on how to best meet ELs' needs. In the 2016-17 school year in the state of California, Spanish-speaking ELs comprised 82.19% of the total EL population (California Department of Education, 2018). Some of the challenges for Spanish-speaking ELs have been related to their EL status. These students may be subjected to bullying and may benefit from programs that promote inclusiveness (McCloud, 2015). Spanish-speaking ELs are also part of the Latino subgroup that has seen suspension rates double from 6.1% to 12% between 1972 and 2010 (McCarter, 2017). The rise in suspension rates has increased the number of Latino students who are risk of entering the school-to-prison pipeline. With the rise of school suspensions, many school leaders have turned to restorative practices as an alternative form of discipline. Policy makers and school leaders should become familiarized with effective restorative practices implementation strategies that work well with Spanish-speaking ELs.

In a position that requires addressing many competing priorities, working with other professionals, and implementing initiatives, school administrators must implement leadership practices that are effective. An effective approach in restorative practices implementation is a distributed leadership practice where individuals with expertise and interest become active participants in implementing the initiative. A distributed leadership approach is practical because it allows an administrator to give a group of

individuals the responsibility to make decisions as a collective group, as opposed to a top-down approach.

In the high-stakes field of education, with the demands of meeting standardized test scores, internal school assessments, parent concerns, and the social and emotional needs of a wide range of students, policy makers and school leaders need to have knowledge of effective practices and strategies. The data in this study can help policy makers and school leaders (a) understand the importance of the compatibility of a school's culture with the philosophy of restorative practices, (b) recognize the critical importance of parent education on restorative practices, and (c) understand that a distributed leadership approach is an effective method for restorative practices implementation. With the rise in Spanish-speaking ELs, along with their social and emotional needs and the rise of Latino suspension rates, school leaders need to implement change now more than ever. The time for action is now.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

RPs is a framework that can be used to address discipline, build positive classroom and school environments, and address the social and emotional needs of the students. The implementation of RPs is a contrast to the traditional, punitive method of addressing discipline.

1. Tell me about how your district/school decided to implement RP?
2. Can you tell me more about the steps that led to selecting RP?
3. How did teachers receive professional development about restorative practices during the year?
4. What strategies did you observe in the implementation process?
5. What social and emotional needs do you see in your Spanish-speaking EL population?
6. How did your Spanish-speaking ELs respond to RP?
7. Do you think the social and emotional needs of Spanish-speaking ELs is being met through RP?
8. How would you describe the impact that restorative practices has had on Spanish-speaking ELs?
9. Do you believe whether restorative practices have increased your Spanish-speaking EL population's connection with the school and a sense of belonging?
10. How do your Spanish-speaking ELs respond to informal and formal circles?
11. Is there any additional information regarding today's interview that wasn't addressed and that you would like to add?

APPENDIX B

Recruitment Letter

Dear (Potential Participant):

Thank you for your consideration in participating in this study. I am a doctoral student at City University of Seattle. I have received approval from City University of Seattle Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this study.

I am contacting school staff members at (school) to be a part of this study. You have been identified as a potential participant. Your interest in the study does not confirm being selected as a participant. If you are selected, there is no benefits, inducements, or rewards to you for participating. However, the information that you provide will help (school) better understand restorative practices implementation and the lessons learned when implementing it with Spanish-speaking English learners. Participation is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw with, or without cause. There is no penalty for not participating or withdrawing. Additionally, there are no costs associated with participating. All of the information will be treated as confidential. No personally identifiable information such as names will be used in documentation arising from this research.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the lessons school leaders learned when implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking English learners. The data will be from interviews, walkthroughs campus buildings, and analysis of restorative practice documents. The data gathered will be useful for your school, and future school leaders in a future time who may be in the position of implementing restorative practices with Spanish-speaking English learners.

Participant Parameters: I am currently seeking staff members involved in the implementation and support of restorative practice at (school). Each participant will be interviewed face-to-face and audio-recorded for approximately 30-45 minutes.

If you have questions, or would like more information, feel free to contact me by replying to this email. If you decide to participate, I will need to obtain a consent form for you to sign and schedule your interview.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Hector N. Corona