

# Policy and Procedure: The Impact on English Language Learners

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# 50.6 Million ELLs in US Public Schools

-National Center for Education Statistics, 2016

**English Language Learners (ELL)** - children entering school who are not able to fluently speak or comprehend English

Schools primarily evaluate performance of ELLs through English proficiency assessment

Most school systems lack the proper resources and training necessary to accommodate

ELLs typically perform lower academically and show increased emotional problems than their peers

# Research Question & Criteria

What are the causes behind emotional problems and lower academic performance in ELLs?

- Career in education
- Increase in immigration to the US
- Little information behind the “Why” instead of the “What”
- JSTOR and EBSCO (Academic Search Complete)
  - Government policies and school procedures being implemented

# School Support

University of Northern Colorado, researchers Diaz and Cochran looked deeper into a potential cause that they refer to as *teacher power* and its effect on the students' self esteem

- Expert power, referent power, and reward power were found to be the most effective
- Students reported wanting their instructors to understand and support them without being made to feel dumb or less than

Nierhaus & Adelson examined the relations between school support and parental involvement

- parents were more involved in schools that had more support services, which then positively affected academic outcomes
- ELL students performed lower academically and had increased problems when attending schools with more support services

# Governmental Policy

## State Legislature

Gisele Waters conducted a case study examining the effects of English-only instruction on reading scores

- students scored significantly lower than their peers, never rising above the fifteenth percentile
- forcing students towards monolingualism instead of multilingualism

## No Child Left Behind Act, ESEA

Abedi and Dietel examined challenges that resulted from federal policy

- Too high of expectations on school systems and students to close academic gap and demonstrate high proficiency

Bailey and Carroll discussed the unclear guidelines required of schools by both act

- current parts of ELL assessment are too varied and do not address all of the outside factors that could affect results

# Findings & Research Question

What are the causes behind emotional problems and lower academic performance in ELLs?

## Poor Teaching Methods

- Teachers that were close-minded, demeaning, or avoidant resulted in negative emotions among ELLs (Diaz, et al., 2016)
- Negative feelings resulted in ELL students not trying as hard academically resulting in lower scores (Diaz, et al., 2016)

## Lack of School Support

- The more resources offered leads to higher academic scores, as long as school can accommodate (Nierhaus & Adelson, 2014)
- More school support leads to higher parental involvement and higher scores (Nierhaus & Adelson, 2014)

## Inadequate Government Policy

- NCLB and ESEA placed high expectations on English proficiency scores that most schools were unprepared to meet (Bailey & Carroll, 2004)
- Lack of guidelines around bilingual instruction led to forced assimilation (Waters, 2001)

# Future Research

Continue to evaluate effects of policies and procedures being put in place

Examine the behavioral patterns ELL students show based on challenges they face

Look for the disconnect between both federal and state governments and school districts when it comes to creating policies

Investigate other factors that could cause lower academic performance and emotional issues among ELLs

# References

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