

## **ABSTRACT**

**DISSERTATION:** Attitudes, Backgrounds, and Leadership Efficacy of English as a Second Language Program Directors in Indiana Schools: Implications for Policy, Leadership, and Professional Development

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This study researched the preparedness of English as a Second Language directors in school corporations in Indiana to determine their background experiences, awareness of second language acquisition research, levels of qualification, attitudes towards English learners (ELs), efficacy for leading ESL programs, and to gain an understanding of how to provide guidance and support to this group of individuals. Furthermore, the study investigated relationships between these factors to gain insight into how they impact each other and program implementation. The study endeavored to provide useful information towards policy making and support of ESL leaders. The research was quantitative and utilized a tailored design Internet survey to collect data. Descriptive data was analyzed using analysis of frequency (distribution, central tendency and dispersion of individual variables), while relationships between elements were analyzed using a combination of ANOVA, and Pearson's Product Moment correlational analysis, followed by post hoc analysis and regression analysis. Findings indicated that having experience with

English learners and teaching certification for working with English learners were significant factors in the areas of knowledge, attitude, and efficacy. An exploratory model of ESL program leadership, developed by the researcher, concluded that when EL directors are certified and bring experience of working with ELs to their positions, it is more likely that their programs will be successfully implemented. Finally, the interplay of variables showed that these directors' levels of knowledge of second language acquisition principles and efficacy for leading the ESL program had highly significant effects on attitude, program implementation and each other. The implications of this study include directions for policy, training programs, and further research.

