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Printing Date: 30 December 2024

Broadcast Type: Local Broadcast

Typesetting and Design: EDU Yayıncılık

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Editorial

Ali Ersoy[1] iD

To cite this article

Dear Readers,

I am delighted to share the new issue of the *Qualitative Inquiry in Education: Theory and Practice* (QIETP) journal. This issue includes five articles: four research articles and one review article. I am grateful to our esteemed authors and referees for their contributions to QIETP.

The first article in this issue is a research study titled "A Phenomenographic Analysis of School Principals' Understandings of Teachers' Idiosyncratic Deals" by Gökhan Özaslan. The study focuses on understanding school principals' perceptions of teachers' unique behaviors through a phenomenographic design. I believe conducting the study with a phenomenographic approach will give researchers and readers diverse perspectives.

The second article, "Exploring the Course 'Foreign Language Teaching in Primary Schools': Perspectives of Future Teachers," is a research study by Zeynel Amaç. In his study, Amaç examines the contribution of foreign language teaching to the professional development of prospective classroom teachers using a basic qualitative research design. This study is significant for teacher education and generating insights into teacher training.

The third article in this issue is Nai-Cheng Kuo and Molly Gilbreath's "Exploring Five Modes of Thinking for Qualitative Data Analysis on Ikeda's Peace Dialogues," which employs document analysis. In this study, the reserchers provides an overview of the five modes of thinking (categorical, narrative, dialectic, poetic, and diagrammatic) proposed by Freeman (2017) for qualitative data analysis, demonstrating how each mode can be applied to analyze Daisaku Ikeda's philosophical framework. Additionally, the study discusses why understanding Ikeda's peace dialogues through multiple modes of thinking is important and identifies the foundational dimensions of peace illustrated in his dialogues. This work offers an innovative perspective on qualitative data analysis based on documents.

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The fourth article, "How Do Students Interpret Human Rights in Their Drawings?" is a research study conducted by Büşra Solakoğlu, Şule Aksoy Ogün, and Arife Figen Ersoy. The researchers aim to understand elementary fourth-grade students' perceptions of human rights through the drawings they create. This study inspires researchers, particularly because it uses art-based methods and focuses on the subject matter.

The fifth article is a systematic review study by Tara Indar and Marie Byrd, titled "A Leading with Cultural Responsiveness: A Systematic Review of the Literature." The researchers focuses on the role of cultural responsiveness in addressing the low academic achievement of Black/African American and Hispanic students. This systematic literature review emphasizes the role of culturally responsive leadership in evidence-based best practices for effective educational leadership. The study is significant for highlighting the relationship between the lack of meaningful cultural connections among students, teachers, and educational leaders and the issue of low academic

Professor Ali Ersoy
Editor-in-Chief

Keywords:

Qualitative Inquiry in Education: Theory and Practice, editorial, phenomenographic analysis, basic qualitative research, Ikeda's Peace Dialogues, document analysis, art-based research, systematic literature review

A Phenomenographic Analysis of School Principals' Understandings of Teachers' Idiosyncratic Deals*

Gökhan Özaslan[1] iD

Abstract

Purpose: Idiosyncratic deals (i-deals) is a concept that describes agreements between an employer or its representative and individual employees on personalized arrangements that benefit both the employee and the organization. The aim of this study is to determine how many different ways school principals understand the i-deals they make with teachers.

Method: Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with sixteen school principals who were diversified in terms of the sector (public/private), school level, and gender. This study was conceived in the tradition of phenomenography within the framework of qualitative methodology. Phenomenography is a research method that aims to reveal how many different ways a group of participants experience and understand a particular phenomenon.

Findings: Results indicate that participants understood these agreements in five different ways: (A1) An acceptable practice to motivate teachers if it does not lead to certain problems. (A2) A practice I would not prefer to the systems I use for problematic issues in my school. (A3) In some cases, it is a practice that teachers deserve. (A4) Although it carries some risks, it is still a necessary practice to increase motivation and remove obstacles to performance, and (A5) A necessary practice to benefit from teachers with key skills. Consistent with the logic of phenomenographic design, these understandings were ordered hierarchically based on the extent to which one understanding encompasses the other.

Keywords

idiosyncratic deals, i-deals, teachers, school principals, phenomenography

Introduction

Teachers sometimes ask their principals for personalized arrangements, such as taking on tasks where they can use their skills or being able to work with a program where they can more comfortably perform their other responsibilities outside of work. Just like employees in other sectors, teachers need these personalized arrangements that are not recognized as standard for other teachers. Both they and their schools ultimately benefit from these arrangements. This principal-teacher interaction, referred to in the management literature as idiosyncratic deals which I discuss in more detail below, is a management phenomenon with which school administrators are familiar, even if they do not know the name for it.

In its well-established definition, the term "i-deals" (idiosyncratic deals) stands for "voluntary, personalized agreements of a nonstandard nature negotiated between individual employees and their employers regarding terms that benefit each party" (Rousseau et al., 2006, p.978). These negotiations are not limited to those between employees and employers; they can be conducted between employees and their supervisors or HR managers as well (Hornung et al., 2018). Rousseau et al., (2016) attributed the growth of i-deals to several factors such as the decline of collective bargaining, the value that highly talented and motivated employees bring to their employers, the increasing responsibility placed on individuals to manage their employment and their increased effort in seeking personally favorable work arrangements. From these authors perspective, coupled with the vital importance of retaining star performers, idiosyncratic deals become the ideal way of using organizational resources for human resource management.

Rousseau et al., (2006) described the four key characteristics of I-deals as follows: (1) They are individually negotiated, that is, drawing on their perceived market values, individual employees bargain for their own arrangements distinct from those of their coworkers. (2) They are heterogeneous which means that at least some of the terms of an i-deal are tailored specifically to the dealmaker resulting in intragroup heterogeneity over some aspects of working conditions. This nonstandard nature of i-deals can cause the dealmaker's coworkers to view their organizations as unfair (Greenberg et al, 2004). (3) They benefit both employer and employee, such that for employees, i-deals address the need for personalized work arrangements, while also benefiting employers by attracting, retaining, and motivating valued employees. As a result, i-deals vary from the unfavorable person-specific arrangements such as favoritism or cronyism in that these arrangements are founded on the legitimacy of shared values (Bal and Rousseau, 2016). (4) They vary in scope in such a way that some employment packages can include only one or two idiosyncratic elements, while some others can be designed fully idiosyncratic. An employee may need only flexible work hours while another one needs every component, from work hours to pay or title as tailored to his or her needs.

The relevant literature suggests that depending on their timing and content, i-deals can take on a variety of types. Different timing and content of i-deals may have significantly different consequences for the i-dealer, the employer, and third parties, most importantly the i-dealer's coworkers (Rousseau et al., 2016). In terms of timing, earlier research (Rousseau et al., 2006, 2009; Rousseau and Kim, 2004) had classified i-deals as ex ante (i.e., during the recruitment process) and ex post (i.e., after working some time). However, in a recent study (Rousseau et al., 2016), a third dimension called "in responses to a threat to leave" appeared (p.186).

One of the conceptualizations of the content of i-deals can be seen in the scale developed by Rosen et al., (2013) which featured four dimensions: schedule flexibility (about being granted a work schedule that is suitable to off-the-job demands), location flexibility (about being able to work remotely from the main office), financial incentives (about being able to negotiate compensation arrangements), and task and work responsibilities (about being given tasks that are suitable to develop new or existing skills). The content dimensions can be categorized in other ways as well. In a more recent study, Rousseau et al., (2016) categorized the types of i-deals as "development," "task," "flexibility" (including schedule and location issues), "reduced workload," and "financial" i-deals. From this perspective, task i-deals differ from development i-deals ("career i-deals" in Hornung et al., 2014) in that the former is about making the job content more enjoyable while the latter is about making it more conducive to personal development.

Based on my review of the literature, I grouped the factors affecting i-deals into the following three categories: (1) organizational characteristics, including organizations' structural conditions (Hornung et al., 2008, 2009), human resource practices (Tuan, 2017; Villajos et al., 2019); and quality of the exchange relationship between i-dealers and supervisors (Hornung et al., 2010; Hornung et al., 2014; Rosen et al., 2013); (2) supervisor characteristics, including supervisors' employee-oriented consideration (Hornung et al., 2011), perspective taking (i.e., cognitive empathy; Rao & Kunja, 2019), experience of being caregiver for elders (Las Heras et al., 2017), exchange ideologies, justice sensitivities and their experiences of having been granted i-deals in the past (Laulié et al., 2019), their perceptions of the extent to which i-deals are of benefit to both the employee and organization (Davis & Van der Heijden, 2018), and unfulfilled organizational responsibilities to employees (Hornung et al., 2009); (3) employee characteristics, including employees' initiative (Hornung et al., 2008; 2009; Tang & Hornung, 2015), political skill (Rosen et al., 2013), networking skill (Guerrero & Jeanblanc, 2017), perception that they are overqualified for their current job (Huang and Hu, 2021), pursuing status striving goals and witnessing coworkers receiving i-deals (Ng & Lucianetti, 2016), job level (i.e., employee socioeconomic position; Jonsson et al., 2021).

I prefer to present the outcomes of i-deals under two headings: Employee and supervisor perceptions of the positive and negative outcomes. The positive outcomes include work engagement (Hornung et al., 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011; Zhang & Wu, 2019), commitment (Bal & Boehm, 2019; Hattori et al., 2021; Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Hornung et al., 2008; Rosen et al., 2013), job performance (Hornung et al., 2014), administrative error control (Tuan, 2017), client satisfaction (Bal & Boehm, 2019), OCB (Anand et al., 2010), employee initiative (Hornung et al., 2010), constructive voice behavior (Ng & Feldman, 2015), innovative work behavior (Kimwolo & Cheruiyot, 2020), psychological empowerment and taking charge (Wang & Long, 2018), perceived organizational support (Zhang & Wu, 2019), job satisfaction (Rosen et al., 2013; Ho & Tekleab, 2016), creativity (Wang et al., 2018), skill acquisition, job autonomy, reduced work overload, occupational self-efficacy and lesser work strain, (Hornung et al., 2014), job complexity, job control, and lesser job stressors (Hornung et al., 2010), psychological employment relationship (Rousseau et al., 2009), employability of older workers (Oostrom et al., 2016), and lastly, work-family enrichment (Tang & Hornung, 2015). While flexibility i-deals were found to relate negatively to work-family conflict (Hornung et al., 2008, 2011), developmental i-deals related positively to that problem (Hornung et al., 2008).

Purpose of the Study

I decided to do this research because I noticed some deficiencies in the literature on i-deals. The first was that the topic of i-deals in the context of educational organizations has not yet been thoroughly researched. It is not possible to know the exact number of teachers working worldwide, but in my home country alone, 1,112,305 teachers work at the K-12 level (Aktaş Salman et al., 2021), so we can assume that this phenomenon is very common in schools. However, we, the researchers in the field of educational administration, had not yet seen this phenomenon as a research topic. I conducted the first study on this topic (Özaslan, 2023) as a multiple case study on the factors that facilitate making ideals between principals and teachers in public and private schools. In this study, I identified 6 factors for professional development, 7 factors for task flexibility, fourteen factors for schedule flexibility, 8 factors for location flexibility, 7 factors for reduced workload, and 2 factors for pay-related i-deals. In addition, in this study, I also identified 8 factors that reduce the frequency of these idiosyncratic deals. As a researcher in educational administration, I believe that each principal has his or her own understanding of these personalized, nonstandard arrangements for teachers, and that it is of great importance to know the variety of these understandings, as knowledge of this variety can shed light on the circumstances under which idiosyncratic deals are made in schools. The second reason I started these studies is that the literature on i-deals, which has been very well developed over the last two decades, has focused almost exclusively on subordinates' perceptions and has not yet adequately considered managers' perceptions of these personalized arrangements (Bal and Rousseau, 2016). Two studies involving managers (Hornung et al., 2009; Lai et al., 2009) have focused on other issues and not on managers' understanding of these arrangements.

The purpose of this phenomenographic study, which I designed based on these two deficits I saw in the relevant literature, is to determine how many different ways school principals understand the i-deals they make with teachers. In this study, I have presented the different ways school principals understand i-deals, which could be stimulating for management researchers studying other industries. Furthermore, through the implications for practice, I believe I have contributed to the accumulation of knowledge needed for effective school management, and through the implications for research, I have provided a direction for future research on this topic. Finally, I have provided an accurate and easily understood example of phenomenographic research, of which there are very few examples in the field of educational administration.

Methodology

Marton and Pong (2005, p. 335) define traditional phenomenography as research that "aims to investigate the qualitatively different ways in which people understand a particular phenomenon or an aspect of the world around them." Since this work began with the intention of identifying the various ways in which a group of principals understood the idiosyncratic deals made with teachers, I felt that phenomenography was the most appropriate research design.

In Marton's (1988) explanation of the research tradition, this design is based on a second-order perspective that describes "one aspect of the world as it appears to the individual" (p. 145) rather than a first-order perspective that describes an aspect of the world as it is. I chose phenomenography as the research method because in this study I did not want to find out what

a nonstandard, personalized arrangement is or means to everyone (only a first-order perspective can do that), but rather how principals understand these arrangements (second-order perspective). In phenomenography, knowledge is assumed to both depend on reality outside of individuals and to be based on individuals' thoughts; therefore, knowledge of reality may vary from individual to individual (Svensson, 1997). This neither exclusively positivist nor exclusively constructivist perspective is the second reason why phenomenography appeals to me as a non-positivist researcher oriented toward commonsense realism (as defined by Mark et al., 2000).

In phenomenography, the unit of description is the conception (Marton and Pong, 2005). Conceptions are represented in the form of categories of description (Barnard et al., 1999) and are used to explain how research participants understand a particular phenomenon in different ways (Larsson & Holmström, 2007). Research participants may express more than one understanding (Barnard et al., 1999; Marton & Pong, 2005). In phenomenography, conceptions cannot be attributed to specific participants (Barnard et al., 1999), as this research tradition focuses on the diversity of conceptions rather than the commonality of a particular conception (Orgill, 2012). For this reason, phenomenographic research does not report frequencies or discuss the degree of agreement in conceptions. There is a debate in the literature as to whether the terms category of description and conception are the same thing (Bowden, 2000). In my study, instead of using the terms of category of description or conception, I have preferred to use the term "understanding," which is frequently used in the literature and which, I think, is more comprehensible to readers.

Informants

Trigwell (2000) specifically pointed out that phenomenographic research should involve a minimum of fifteen participants (because a smaller number would not be able to capture the diversity of experiences) and a maximum of twenty participants (because the amount of data would be an overwhelming psychological burden). In my participant matrix, which I created with this caveat in mind, I decided that sixteen participants were best suited to cover the dimensions of variation that I felt were necessary. Another common practice to elicit variation in understanding of focused phenomena is to diversify the study group. In this regard, I found it appropriate to differentiate the participants in my study by sector, school level, and gender, and I ensured that my participants were distributed so that they did not overlap in any of these dimensions of variation. To illustrate, I have one male and one female participant in my study group who are principals in private elementary schools, and the same is true for my two participants in public elementary schools. So, of the 16 participants in my study group, eight work in private schools and eight work in public schools. At the school level, four are in preschool, four are in elementary school, and four are in high school. In terms of the gender dimension, eight of my participants are female and eight are male. The participants in the present study were the same principals as the participants in my previous study (Özaslan, 2023) on principals' views on the factors that facilitate idiosyncratic deals with teachers. Although the questions and methods of the two studies were completely different, I knew my participants more intimately because I had spoken to them as part of another study, which gave me a considerable advantage in interpreting their statements.

Data Collection and Analysis

After obtaining the necessary permissions for the research, I conducted my interviews with audio recordings in 2022. Prior to the interviews, I gave each participant a wet-signed commitment form informing them of their rights as participants. My previous research experiences have led me to believe that giving participants the opportunity to clarify their thoughts on the research topic by sending them research questions prior to each interview has a positive impact on the quality of the data. For this reason, after inviting participants to the research interview by phone, I sent them the interview questions and a one-paragraph explanation of the concept of i-deals to emphasize that the phenomenon I am studying is not nepotism but an ethical practice in schools. My interview questions were as follows:

1. Do you recall a clear example where a teacher asked you for a personalized arrangement (just for him/her)?

2. What are your feelings and thoughts about this example? How do you feel about this arrangement?

3. Do you remember any other examples?

4. Thinking of all these examples, how would you describe or imagine a personalized, nonstandard arrangement for teachers in general?

I conducted my phenomenographic analysis in the following steps:

1. I completed the transcription by using MacOS speech recognition software.

2. I read each transcribed text twice from beginning to end to familiarize myself with what the participants were saying.

3. Using MaxQDA 2022 software, I did my first-level coding on the transcripts to identify the structural dimension of what the participants were talking about.

4. I undertook first-level coding to identify the referential dimension in which participants spoke about how they understood this phenomenon.

5. I analyzed the expressions in the referential and structural dimensions together. In this phase, I created and named understandings.

6. I read all the understandings comparatively and checked their relevance. In this phase, I often returned to the raw data to reread and review all the participants' interview statements from beginning to end to understand them (iteration), and I tried to see if there was a hierarchical relationship between them. This approach allowed me to better understand the participants' understandings on a holistic level.

7. I created the outcome space and presented the hierarchical arrangement of understandings as a shape drawing in this space.

8. I sent the outcome space to the participants and gave them time to see if they had any objections or further contributions.

As a limitation, I would like to point out that I took the validity measures I mentioned above, but instead of the data being analyzed by only one researcher, the analysis of all data by two

researchers independently could have resulted in different perspectives on the participants' understandings.

Findings

Some of the participants from the private sector considered the personalized agreement with the teacher as an indispensable condition for success, while another from the same sector stated that he aligned his management practices with the principles of the institution rather than with the demands of the teacher. On the other hand, some participants working in public schools were concerned that i-deals with a teacher negatively affects the other teachers' perception of organizational justice by disrupting equity in the school and expressed their tendency to set up systems in the school to prevent this, while some other participants from the same sector expressed that they risk violating the written rules to some extent to create the conditions that allow teachers to work effectively. I am of the opinion that the determining factor in making i-deals with a teacher is not the sector, but the manager's attitude in this regard. I found no relationship between any of the variables (sector, gender, branch, school level) that I adopted as dimensions of variation in this research and participants' understanding of i-deals with a teacher. On the other hand, as seen in Figure 1, I would say that there is a hierarchical relationship between participants' understandings in terms of scope.

Figure 1

Hierarchical Structuring of the Participants' Understandings of i-deals with a Teacher
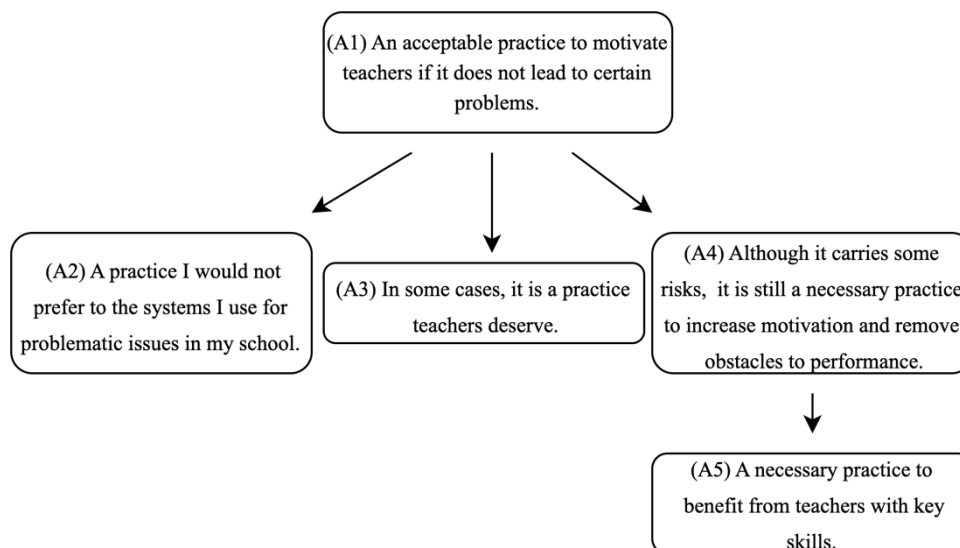
In this hierarchy, all participants viewed i-deals as "an acceptable practice to motivate teachers if it does not lead to certain problems," but a step later, they differed in their overall attitudes toward these arrangements. For example, in this hierarchical classification, participants with the A5 understanding also had the A4 and A1 understandings. In contrast, participants with A2 understanding had no understanding other than the A1.

(A1) An acceptable practice to motivate teachers if it does not lead to certain problems. In this understanding, which all participants have, i-deals with a teacher is an acceptable practice to increase the teacher's motivation and thus make her more useful to the students, as long as it does not lead to some problems that the participants care about. The extent to which participants are willing to make such arrangements also varies. To illustrate this with an example, the difference in the degree of willingness is visible among the two participants whose direct excerpts I have quoted below:

> The teacher will have a request, and you will not make that request! ... The teacher must enter the lesson willingly. This is how success increases. I have never sent a teacher to the classroom with heartbreak. Why? It's easy to break hearts. It's easy. If I went up to the hallway and hung up my face, I would break the hearts of twenty teachers. But they go into class, and I'm the one who is responsible for their poor performance in that class. That's what I think. (Private middle school, Male)

> The absence of a teacher in school is a big problem. Imagine that for seven hours, there is no teacher in the class. Sometimes the teacher on duty takes care of those students. But when that coincides with the time when the teacher on duty and the administrators are busy, the school is in chaos. So, we can't imagine that the administrators would cheerfully say, 'Okay, my teacher is going to improve himself.' But sometimes there's nothing to do, and we just have to accept that.' That makes us uncomfortable. I think everybody who sits in the principal's chair feels that because, as I said, a lot of work in the school is going to be interrupted. They don't want that disruption, that chaos. It's not because we don't want our teachers to improve. (Public middle school, Female)

The participants who have this understanding described the problems that the i-deal should not cause can be summarized under three headings. These are (1) a violation of laws and regulations for some participants working in public schools, (2) a violation of policies established by school founders for some participants working in private schools, and (3) an interference with teachers' perceptions of organizational justice for some participants from both sectors. This last factor is evident in the following excerpt:

> It is very important to create equal conditions for teachers, because if you give even one teacher advantages that you don't give to others, the inner peace in the school is disturbed. I have to balance that inner peace. If I meet teacher A's demand, teacher B will hear it. If he demands the same thing tomorrow and I cannot fulfill that demand, then the peace in the school is disturbed. (Private primary school, Male)

The fact that a teacher is helpless in any matter seems to increase the likelihood that i-deals will be granted. This is evident in the following excerpt:

> The teacher may have experienced an unexpected event, lost a child, or lost her spouse. How efficient can this teacher be? If we force this teacher to do certain things, she will be tormented. Her mind would be somewhere else. … We must help that teacher. (Public middle school, Male)

In such a case, the question might arise whether the deal for a personalized arrangement can fall under the concept of i-deals, which by definition should also benefit the institution. Considering the benefits of the teacher's increased commitment to his or her school after overcoming that difficult period, I believe that deals such as the one described above meet the mutual benefit criterion of the concept of i-deals.

(A2) A practice I would not prefer to the systems I use for problematic issues in my school. The statements of some participants suggest that they are concerned that the i-deals they grant to individual teachers may undermine other teachers' perceptions of organizational justice, and therefore choose to create rule systems that apply to all teachers and cannot be stretched, especially on issues that may cause conflict between teachers. Two of the participants who have this understanding explained that teachers who knew they could not bend the systems

established in the school accepted over time not to make conflicting demands regarding those established systems.

> When teachers come to me, they know I will give them permission if they have a valid excuse. At the teachers' board meeting earlier this year, I said, "Don't come to me asking for permission if you would say, 'I am going to my relative's wedding' or 'I am going sightseeing,'" My red lines are clear. Teachers don't come to me with requests like that. I like to speak openly. Everything is transparent. My red lines are clear; no one comes and makes such demands. ... My rules are clear. I am known here as a strict person. I don't go beyond my rules, and I don't have headaches. My rules are unchangeable. (Public middle school, Male)

Participants who have the A2 understanding, as mentioned earlier, also have the A1 understanding. Thus, they are aware of the advantages that the i-deals granted to teachers can offer and do not reject these agreements completely if these agreements do not cause problems in the subjects that concern them.

(A3) In some cases, it is a practice that teachers deserve. Some participants made a clear distinction between equality and fairness, making it clear that they were more inclined toward fairness than equality. In this understanding, an i-deal granted to a teacher serves as a means of ensuring fairness in school, as the following direct quote shows:

> Are equality and justice the same thing? Is not that very important? There is no equality in these personalized arrangements, is there? I think there should be no negative discrimination between civil servants, but there should certainly be a positive discrimination. Did you understand my sentence? Instead of demoting the low-performing teacher, you should elevate the high-performing teacher. Here you can't take away from the teacher something that the state gives, but you can give him something that the state doesn't. ... His salary will be the same, his duties will be the same, his weekly schedule will be the same, but if I give a certificate of achievement, I am not going to give it to every teacher. If there's no positive discrimination, the motivation of the high-performing teacher goes down. The guy says, 'I work harder, but I have the same conditions as the others. Then why am I working?' (Public high school, Male)

(A4) Although it carries some risks, it is still a necessary practice to increase motivation and remove obstacles to performance. I-deals with a teacher may carry the risk of stretching written rules too far or angering other teachers. On the other hand, some participants reported taking risks in stretching written rules to ensure that teachers work efficiently:

> The teacher was from another school, but she volunteered to participate in the preparatory courses for eighth graders that were held on weekends at our school. This teacher was doing her doctorate. She asked me, 'Can we move the class time up an hour?' ... If the inspectors had come and asked, 'Is there a class at that hour?' I might have gotten in trouble, but this teacher was hardworking and successful. As I said, she helped us a lot. Since she came to help us, I said, 'OK, I'll move the class an hour early.' It was a risk, but I said yes without hesitation. (Public primary school, Female)

In this understanding, making i-deals with teachers is a necessary practice to remove obstacles that stand in the way of teachers doing their jobs and to create the conditions for effective work. This practice enables teachers to reach their potential, as the following quote shows:

> For example, I have an English teacher who loves to teach elementary students through play. She said, 'I don't want to teach for exams; send me to elementary school. I'm happy there.' We said, 'Okay.' … Next year, I'll try to get this teacher to work full time at the elementary school. I will advise the school administration to do that, because this teacher teaches English much better there and the students learn it much better. The parents are happy, the teacher is happy, and the students are happy. (Private middle school, Female)

(A5) A necessary practice to benefit from teachers with key skills. In this understanding, in order to benefit from a teacher who has a skill that other teachers in the school do not have, it

is necessary to accept the arrangement that that teacher requires. On the other hand, I must remind you that participants with this understanding also have the A1 understanding, so their teachers' demands should also be within acceptable limits. Participants with this understanding work in schools from which there is a tangible expectation of success -at a much higher level than from the other participants' schools- and the professional skills of some teachers are of great importance in meeting this expectation. The following excerpt illustrates how this situation shapes participants' attitudes toward i-deals.

> If two math teachers leave my school now, can I find teachers of the same quality to replace them? That is the first question. If I find the teachers, can I hire them at the same salary? That's the second question mark. So, if you say I have red lines here, you will have to padlock the door of the school and walk away. (Private high school, Male)

Another final point I would like to make about the results is that some participants gave as examples some practices to which teachers are legally entitled or the requirements that must be met in order to do their job (which almost any administrator will accept without much thought). On a cursory analysis, these examples might lead to the misleading conclusion that all participants are in favor of granting i-deals to teachers. However, when all texts are subjected to a participant-centered, holistic analysis rather than a code-centered one, it becomes clear that the participants who have the A2 understanding are not ready to make i-deals with teachers. Of course, these participants also have the A1 understanding ("An acceptable practice to motivate teachers if it does not lead to certain problems"). However, this does not mean that the participants in question are eager to grant i-deals to teachers. The A1 understanding stems from the fact that -for some participants- the teachers' personalized arrangement demands that do not seem to cause problems can be taken care of through routine management decisions. Participants with the A4 understanding ("Although it carries some risks, it is still a necessary practice to increase motivation and remove obstacles to performance") also have the A1 understanding. This finding suggests that there is a limit to the risk a participant can take (e.g., i-deals granted to teachers at a private school should not conflict with school policies established by the school's founders).

Discussion

If you look at the results, you can see that the A1 understanding, which I call "An acceptable practice to motivate teachers if it does not lead to certain problems," and the A4, which I call "Although it carries some risks, it is still a necessary practice to increase motivation and remove obstacles to performance," have a common denominator, which is to increase teachers' motivation and thus increase their performance. Given that professional freedom and peer support have a positive influence on teachers' intentions to remain in the teaching profession (Webb et al., 2004), it is not surprising that the teacher motivation function has been one of the defining characteristics since the development of i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2006). In the literature on i-deals, there is research suggesting that employee-centered leadership behaviors lead to positive managerial attitudes toward i-deals (Hornung et al., 2011) and that not only the benefits to employees but also the benefits to the organization may be important to the manager in accepting i-deals (Davis and Van der Heijden, 2018). Parallel to these findings, the A1 and A4 understandings suggest that both teacher well-being and benefits to the school (in terms of benefits to students) may be important to principals in accepting the granting of i-deals to

teachers. As can be seen in a previous study, the participating principals' perception that the personalized arrangements requested by a teacher will not cause serious problems is crucial in granting professional development, schedule, location and reduced workload i-deals to that teacher (Özaslan, 2023). A review of i-deals research shows that these arrangements are positively associated with work engagement (Hornung et al., 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011; Zhang & Wu, 2019), commitment (Bal & Boehm, 2019; Hattori et al., 2021; Ho & Tekleab, 2016; Hornung et al., 2008; Rosen et al., 2013), job performance (Hornung et al., 2014), client satisfaction (Bal & Boehm, 2019), organizational citizenship behavior (Anand et al., 2010), employee initiative (Hornung et al., 2010), and employees' taking charge (Wang & Long, 2018). Although these studies did not involve teachers, it is reasonable to assume that the school is very likely to benefit from teacher satisfaction with i-deals.

The A4 understanding, which I refer to as "Although it carries some risks, it is still a necessary practice to increase motivation and remove obstacles to performance," and the A2 understanding, which I refer to as " A practice I would not prefer to the systems I use for problematic issues in my school, are at the two extremes of possible attitudes toward i-deals. When a teacher is granted an i-deal, other teachers naturally feel certain emotions, and it is possible that these are negative emotions. Participants with the A2 understanding are able to grant teachers i-deals on topics that do not cause problems because they also have the A1 understanding and see i-deals as useful for motivating teachers. However, they indicated that they do not bend the systems they develop on issues that could cause conflict between teachers (such as determining which grade levels teachers teach or where they are on duty) because this could lead to new demands from other teachers, and these demands would eventually cause conflict between teachers. In support of participants' concerns, Ng and Lucianetti's (2016) study showed that employees who witness a coworker receiving an i-deal are more likely to seek i-deals as well. This finding is consistent with the perception expressed by some participants in this study that when one teacher is granted an i-deal, other teachers begin to request i-deals. Ng (2017) has shown that receiving development i-deals is related to being envied while observing that other employees can make such agreements is related to feelings of envy, a more competitive work climate and the resulting feelings of perceived ostracism leading employees to leave their jobs voluntarily. A recent field study (Kong et al., 2020) found a positive relationship between an employee's ability to make an i-deal about the content of work and the emotional exhaustion of other employees. Lee and Chung's (2019) study points to the possibility that participants' concerns with A2 understanding about undermining teachers' perceptions of organizational justice are far from unfounded. In that study, it was shown that there was a negative relationship between an employee's observation that his or her colleagues can receive flexibility (in terms of work location, work hours, and work content) i-deals and that employee's perception of justice. A study conducted in Turkey also shows that teachers' perceptions of distributive justice (along with task visibility) may even influence their perceptions of their colleagues' social loafing levels (Himmetoğlu et al, 2022). Consequently, it is not unwarranted for school administrators to be concerned about their teachers' perceptions of organizational justice. On the other side of the attitudinal continuum, according to participants with the A4 understanding, making i-deals with teachers involves risks, but they are willing to take those risks. To increase motivation and remove barriers to teacher motivation, principals may tend to grant task flexibility, schedule flexibility, and location flexibility i-deals to teachers (Özaslan, 2023). The i-deal literature shows that employees' ability to make i-deals

has positive effects on psychological empowerment and taking charge behaviors (Wang & Long, 2018) and that i-deals, especially about professional development, are positively associated with perceived organizational support and work engagement (Zhang & Wu, 2019). These findings suggest that participants with A4 understanding may have made the right choice by taking the risks of i-deals. Regarding the risks, Rousseau et al., (2016) emphasized the importance of considering the potential reactions of the i-deal maker's coworkers so that i-deals do not lead to problems between coworkers.

I would like to begin the discussion of "In some cases, it is a practice teachers deserve" (A3) by mentioning some field studies that I can relate to this understanding. These studies show (1) that managers' consideration of employees is positively related to the extent to which employees negotiate development and flexibility ideals (Hornung et al., 2011), (2) that managers' emphatic concern is positively related to their tendency to approve developmental, schedule, flexibility, and location flexibility (Rao & Kunja, 2019), (3) that managers' perceptions that the organization is not meeting its obligations to employees lead them to grant workload reduction i-deals to employees (Hornung et al., 2009), and (4) that the quality of leader-employee relationship (LMX) influences i-deals between managers and employees (Hornung et al., 2010; Hornung et al., 2014; Rosen et al., 2013). Therefore, it is not surprising that principals who have reason to believe that a teacher has the right to request a personalized arrangement can grant that teacher a flexible schedule, a reduced workload, and even pay-related i-deals (Özaslan, 2023). When the positive impact of principals' tendency to care about teachers' rights and well-being on their acceptance of granting i-deals to teachers, as reflected in the A3 understanding, is evaluated along with the above research findings, it becomes clear that in the school environment, just as in the work environment outside of school, there is a relationship between administrators' appreciation for their subordinates and openness to i-deals.

Field studies showing that organizational conditions, including factors such as employment conditions (Hornung et al., 2008), type of job (Hornung et al., 2009), HR practices (Tuan, 2017; Villajos et al., 2019), and managers' expectations that an i-deal will benefit both the organization and the employee (Davis & Van der Heijden, 2018), influence i-deals suggest that some conditions of the organization can be effective in achieving personalized arrangements with employees. The present study makes the following contribution to the knowledge of organizational conditions referred to in the i-deals literature: I observed the A5 understanding ("A necessary practice to benefit from teachers with key skills") among principals of two high schools that were expected to be remarkably successful. The success of these schools was only possible if some teachers were willing to use skills that other teachers did not have. The willingness of teachers with skills that other teachers do not have is of great importance at these two schools, at least to their principals. The findings from the i-deals literature that the ability to make i-deals is negatively related to turnover intentions (Ho & Tekleab, 2016) and positively related to intentions to continue working after retirement (Bal et al., 2012) suggest that the two participants whose schools must demonstrate clear success are making the right choices to approach i-deals positively. Taken together with the findings of these two studies, it is no surprise to see that to retain qualified teachers in their schools and benefit from their unique skills, principals tended to accept teachers' demands for i-deals on task flexibility, pay-related, and reduced workload (Özaslan, 2023).

Implications for Research and Practice

The numerous field studies on i-deals clearly show the benefits that the organization derives from the impact of these arrangements on employee motivation. Given the totality of the statements made by the participants in this study, it is reasonable to assume that these experienced school leaders also believe in the benefits that i-deals will bring to the school. However, the results of this study also suggest that certain factors make some participants hesitant to initiate i-deals. Informing all stakeholders of i-deals -particularly the founders who set employment policies in their private schools and all teachers who are sometimes opponents of i-deals granted to their colleagues- about the importance and function of i-deals and the benefits they can provide to school effectiveness will help school principals in their efforts to implement these personalized arrangements.

There are some recommendations in the literature on how managers should conduct i-deals. For example, early in the development of the concept, Rousseau (2001) pointed out that i-deals that cannot be disclosed to other employees should not be made. However, it is also apparent that the i-deals literature does not adequately address how these agreements should be executed. The problem is that there are few works on how i-deals should be handled by administrators, and these works do not address the unique characteristics of the field of school administration. I believe that there is a need to train school administrators on how to implement these personalized arrangements without interfering with other teachers' perceptions of organizational justice, but this will first require the results of field research to create the content of this training. To be more specific, the results of this study show how much some participants feared that i-deals granted to one teacher might draw the reaction of other teachers. Therefore, researchers should focus on how i-deals granted to one teacher is perceived by the teacher's colleagues and what factors lead those colleagues to consider i-deals appropriate or unacceptable. Educational administration researchers interested in the concept of i-deals can make an important contribution to efforts to increase school effectiveness by focusing on this practical dimension.

Funding Statement

Statement of Interest

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/ or publication of this article.

Research and Publication Ethics Statement

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Ethics Committee of Necmettin Erbakan University on 11/02/2022, number 36.

Gatekeeper approval for this study was granted by the Konya Provincial Directorate of National Education on 03/03/2022, number 44926675.

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Exploring the Course "Foreign Language Teaching in Primary Schools": Perspectives of Future Teachers[*]

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To cite this article

Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to evaluate the "Foreign Language Teaching in Primary Schools" course from the perspectives of preservice classroom teachers, analyzing their views on the course's effectiveness and its impact on their professional development. The research sought to contribute to the restructuring of the classroom teaching undergraduate program to better prepare future teachers for foreign language education in Turkish primary schools.

Method: The study adopted a qualitative research method, utilizing a basic qualitative design. The data were collected through an interview form developed by the researcher, which consisted of demographic questions and items exploring participants' opinions on the course. Purposeful sampling was used, and 23 prospective classroom teachers participated. The data were analyzed thematically using inductive coding with MaxQDA qualitative data analysis software.

Findings: The analysis identified four main themes: Expectations from the Course, Learning Outcomes and Skills, Course Practices, and Suggestions. Prospective teachers expressed expectations for practical, content-rich instruction. They reported significant gains in language teaching methods, classroom management, and student engagement. However, challenges included language proficiency and maintaining student motivation. Suggestions for improvement included more hands-on activities and the integration of technology.

Implications: The findings underscored the need to enhance teacher education curricula by making foreign language courses more practical and incorporating up-to-date materials and technology-supported teaching methods. These changes are expected to contribute to the professional development of future teachers and improve the quality of foreign language education in primary schools. The study also offers recommendations for future research on the long-term effects of such courses on teachers' professional growth.

Keywords

foreign language teaching, primary education, teacher education, teacher candidates

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[*] A part of this research was presented at EDUCongress 2024, Diyarbakır, Türkiye.
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Problem Statement

Second language skills are vital for individuals to communicate, develop cultural awareness and succeed in the competitive labor market nowadays. In this context, starting the language learning process at an early age offers a significant advantage in terms of language learning (Çimen, 2020; Maynard, 2012). Foreign language in primary schools education offers this early learning opportunity. This allows students to develop their foreign language skills. Primary school classroom teachers, as key actors, guide students in this early language learning process. Therefore, teachers who are well-equipped in foreign language teaching are a critical factor in the success of foreign language education (Bekleyen, 2020).

There are numerous studies investigating the challenges and perceptions related to foreign language teaching in Türkiye. For example, Özel, Konca, and Zelyurt (2016) emphasized that pre-service preschool teachers see foreign language learning as both a priority and a necessity, in line with Cingi's (2021) findings emphasizing the importance of foreign language education at an early age. However, Pan and Akay (2015) found that despite their positive attitudes to English, pre- service teachers experienced anxiety about teaching English. Similarly, Kılınç (2016) found that teachers who teach second grade primary school students have positive views about the English curriculum, but they face great difficulties in implementation. Mutlu (2017) identified the difficulties in foreign language teaching in primary schools in Türkiye as follows: Inadequate teacher competencies, low weekly hours of language classes, emphasis on grammar rather than speaking skills, and lack of teaching materials. In addition to this Tabrizi et al. (2023) confirm that practicing time for English is not adequate in primary schools.

More recent studies have shown diverse things affecting teaching foreign languages. For instance, Ülker (2022) conducted a study with primary school teachers in multigrade classrooms for her master's thesis. The results of this research showed that there were various challenges in terms of not having enough time and resources to teach language skills. Doğan et al. (2020) found similarly that teachers of multigrade classrooms had difficulties related to materials and motivation of students to learn English. They also did not feel to have enough skills to teach English.

A body of research has identified problems related to teaching languages in primary schools. For example, a study by Falah et al. (2023) pointed out some of the problems related to teacher qualifications and a lack of resources in teaching languages at primary schools in Indonesia. They also found problems like low student motivation and not enough time. Turan et al. (2024) found that many teachers in primary schools in Türkiye did not feel ready to teach English. The teachers in the study said it would be better if the teachers who teach English had training in that area. Kubanç and Selvi (2022) compared how English teachers and primary school teachers approach their work. They found that classroom teachers were enthusiastic about teaching English and enjoyed the subject, but they did not possess the appropriate teaching skills for it. Meanwhile, English teachers did not follow the standards in the English curriculum and used old-fashioned ways of teaching language.

Another study was carried out in Türkiye by Kozikoğlu and Arkalı (2024), dealing with the experience of teachers teaching English. It has been indicated that teacher education was not good enough, the curriculum was too rigid, and there was a lack of support from school administrations and parents. Also, inadequate materials and low levels of student readiness were

cited as problems. Palabıyık and Oral (2022) have pointed out that poor course design, poor teaching materials, inadequate classroom conditions, and problems related to measurement and evaluation are the results of their research on difficulties faced in foreign language education at primary, middle, and high school levels in Türkiye.

These and similar findings are suggestive that foreign language teaching at primary level in Türkiye has many problems. Some of the problems for this include teacher training, curriculum design, lack of resources, and teaching methods. More precisely, this is blamed on some specific issues such as teachers having limited knowledge of world languages as well as teaching skills; the curriculum failing to catch up with current changes, and there is a lack of good educational materials. In this case, primary school teacher candidates should improve in teaching a foreign language and raise their confidence about it.

The Turkish Ministry of National Education revised the primary school curriculum in 2012 as a part of the implementation of the 4-4-4 compulsory 12-year education system. Accordingly, starting from the second grade, English has been inserted into the curriculum as a compulsory foreign language course with two hours per week. This change has increased the demand for English teachers, mostly in rural schools where there is a shortage of English teachers. Similarly, the Council of Higher Education in Türkiye changed the undergraduate curriculum for classroom teaching in 2018. It included the Foreign Language Teaching in Primary Schools (FLTPS) course as a required course, to prepare future classroom teachers to provide English language education.

This is a five-credit course to improve English language teaching in primary schools in Türkiye. According to YÖK (2018), the course covers topics like the comparison between the Turkish and English languages, approaches, methods, techniques, and applications for primary school teaching. The FLTPS course aims at giving a solid foundation for English language education in primary schools. It is hoped that this course will improve the quality of English as a second language education in primary schools in Türkiye, overcome the problem of not enough English teachers in primary schools, and make foreign language education more effective.

This course is relatively new, so there is little research on it. For instance, Tekin (2023) investigated the effectiveness of the FLTPS course on educating classroom teachers by using a mixed-method study. It was indicated that participants became more confident in using different teaching techniques because of the course. However, it also presented some findings showing that primary school teacher candidates were worried about their English skills. In the study by Çapan et al. (2024), anxiety levels of classroom teacher candidates toward learning a foreign language were investigated. The study aimed to understand the sources of anxiety among teacher candidates and their expectations from the FLTPS course. While the course did not significantly reduce overall anxiety levels, it effectively equipped participants with practical teaching skills, lightening their concerns about foreign language instruction. Both studies have presented the importance of the FLTPS course for teacher education.

Despite the related research on English proficiency levels (Tekin, 2023) and anxiety factors (Çapan et al., 2024), it is realized that more effort is needed in how this course contributes to professional development holistically. Therefore, this study wishes to meet this issue halfway by focusing on the course from the perspective of classroom teacher candidates in order to help curriculum development and evaluation (Demirel, 2017). The present study also differs from earlier studies related to the content of the course, its organization, and its contribution toward

fulfilling the practical and teaching needs of future educators. The findings of this research are expected to shed light on potential improvements to the undergraduate curriculum, specifically focusing on the foreign language teaching competencies of future primary school teachers.

According to Demirel (2017) it is important to include pre-service teachers in the curriculum evaluation process. Because their feedback gives a direct idea about the effectiveness, appropriateness and quality of the course. This feedback can be seen as a method for identifying the benefits and drawbacks of the course and can lead to improvements in teaching methods, course materials, and assessment strategies. Since this course is a compulsory part of the current primary teacher undergraduate curriculum, understanding the perspectives of those who are expected to teach the compulsory English course in primary schools can significantly improve the quality of foreign language teaching.

Similar to Boyraz's (2021) study examining pre-service primary school teachers' views on the selective Primary School Program course, this study aimed to explore primary school teacher candidates' perspectives on the FLTPS course and to reveal their views on the content, structure, and overall effectiveness of the course. This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the opinions of pre-service primary school teachers about the FLTPS course?

2. What are the expectations of pre-service primary school teachers from the course?

3. What are the opinions of pre-service primary school teachers about the way the course is taught?

4. What are the suggestions of pre-service primary school teachers to improve the course?

Method

Research Design

A basic qualitative research design was adopted in this study. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) note that unlike other qualitative designs such as case study, phenomenology or ethnography, this design is particularly suitable for research that seeks to understand how individuals interpret and make sense of their experiences based solely on data obtained through interviews. The basic qualitative research design focuses on exploring participants' experiences in a natural setting and provides flexibility in data collection and analysis.

Study Group

This study employed purposive sampling (Yazar & Keskin, 2020) to select its participants. For this purpose individuals with experience and knowledge about the FLTPS course were included. The participants were selected from pre-service classroom teachers studying at Kilis 7 Aralık University Kilisli Muallim Rıfat Faculty of Education, Department of Classroom Teaching and enrolled in the FLTPS course in the 2023-2024 academic year. A total of 23 pre-service teachers,

17 female and six male, voluntarily participated in the study. Purposive sampling allowed the participants' views on the course to be examined, contributed to the in-depth determination of the views on the course and the understanding of the suggestions for improvement.

Data Collection Process

To collect data, the researcher developed an interview form designed to gather participants' perspectives on the FLTPS course. The form comprised two sections: The first section gathered demographic information (e.g., gender, grade level), while the second section consisted of open-ended questions probing participants' views on the course. The eight questions in the second section are related to the course objectives, content, program structure, classroom practices, assessment and evaluation methods, expectations, learning outcomes and participants' suggestions.

Expert review was applied to ensure the validity of the interview form. Two academicians specialized in classroom and foreign language teaching reviewed the form. Their feedback helped to ensure both the clarity and appropriateness of the questions. Before data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the Kilis 7 Aralık University Ethics Committee. Data were gathered through in-person interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 25 minutes. Sufficient time was provided for the participants to explain their views in detail.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2022). In thematic analysis, the parts that repeat and form patterns among the data are determined. Relationships and meanings in the data are identified. In this process, an inductive approach that allows themes to emerge naturally from the data was used. The data were coded in the Maxqda software. This program helped systematically organize and manage the codes. This analysis technique contributed to a detailed understanding of the participants' views. To ensure coding reliability, expert opinion was utilized in line with the recommendations of Braun and Clarke (2022). Accordingly, during the coding process, two experts—one specializing in curriculum and instruction and the other in language teaching—were engaged iteratively to critically discuss the coding framework. This collaborative approach helped ensure coherence and credibility in the thematic analysis.

Credibility and Research Ethics

In order to ensure the credibility, reliability and ethical integrity of the research, the methods specified by Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013) were used. To ground the findings on real experiences, direct quotes from the participants were used without correcting errors such as grammatical errors. However, partial corrections may have been made during translation from Turkish to English. The research process was described in detail to ensure transferability. In addition, consistency was ensured through systematic data analysis. The data were securely stored on the researcher's password-protected computer to ensure their reliability. This allowed for verification when necessary. To protect the anonymity of the participants, they were assigned codes. Male participants were coded with the letter M and female participants with the letter F.
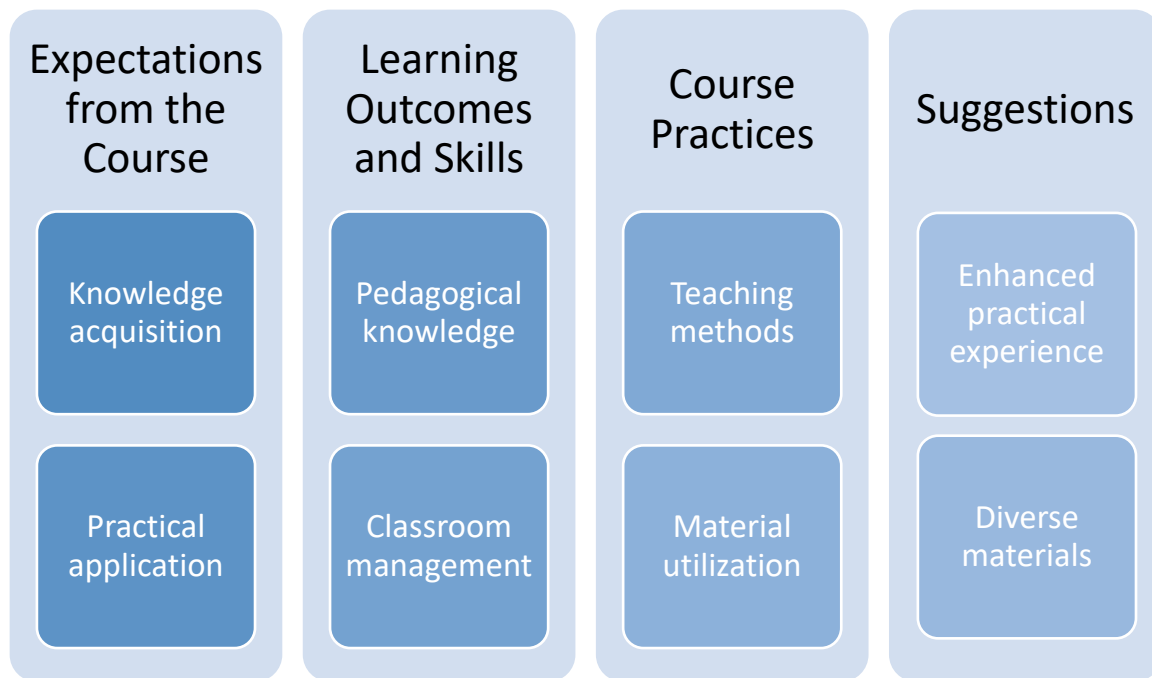
In addition, participants were also given a number (e.g. "M-1" for the first male participant and "M-2" for the second male participant). This technique was used for the confidentiality of the participants.

Findings

As a result of the analysis of the data, four main themes were identified: Expectations from the Course, Learning Outcomes and Skills, Course Practices and Recommendations. These themes summarize the participants' views on the FLTPS course. Figure 1 provides an overview of the themes and their categories.

Figure 1

Themes and Categories

Expectations from the Course	Learning Outcomes and Skills	Course Practices	Suggestions
Knowledge acquisition	Pedagogical knowledge	Teaching methods	Enhanced practical experience
Practical application	Classroom management	Material utilization	Diverse materials

Expectations from the Course

The theme "Expectations from the course" is related to pre-service teachers' expectations before starting the course and the skills they expect to gain from the course. This theme reflects their expectations for both theoretical and practical strategies in foreign language teaching. This theme is shaped around two categories: Knowledge acquisition and practical application.

Knowledge acquisition

This category is related to pre-service teachers' expectations of gaining a theoretical foundation in foreign language teaching. They expect to learn about different pedagogical theories of foreign language teaching, language teaching processes and effective language teaching methods. This includes their expectations that this course will equip them with the basic

knowledge needed to teach foreign languages effectively in primary school settings. One male participant (M-4) emphasized this point:

> My biggest expectation from this course was to learn theoretical knowledge about foreign language teaching and how to deal with the difficulties I might encounter while teaching English. Because my English wasn't good, I was worried about how I could teach a language I didn't know well.

Practical application

Another important expectation of the prospective teachers from this course was to apply what they learned theoretically. The participants hoped the course would equip them with practical skills to apply theoretical knowledge in actual classroom settings. They also emphasized the importance of a practice-based course. Participants particularly valued the activities that allowed them to develop teaching strategies and increase their confidence in real teaching scenarios. A female participant (F-2) shared the following on this issue:

> I was hoping this course would provide practical strategies and theoretical knowledge about teaching English to primary school kids. As you know my English like all others is limited, I can't speak well but I think the practical part of the course was useful. I learned that I can do it.

Learning Outcomes and Skills

The theme "Learning outcomes and skills" highlights the knowledge and skills that participants gained during the course. This theme is important as it relates to the effectiveness of the course and the professional development of participants. The theme of learning outcomes and skills includes two categories: Pedagogical knowledge and classroom management.

Pedagogical knowledge

Pedagogical knowledge includes the theory and teaching strategies that teachers need to know to teach a foreign language effectively. According to this category, some participants stated that they gained important knowledge about language teaching methods and techniques. The course provided them with basic knowledge of methods, skills and pedagogical practices appropriate for different grade levels in primary school. Regarding this category, one participant (F-1) stated the following:

> I learned some basic classroom rules. From the in-class presentations of my peers, I got an idea of how to handle different grade levels and related learning outcomes I learned knowledge about the appropriate methods and techniques to be used in classrooms from the theoretical part of the course. I think I learned which platforms are more effective and what to do in different grade levels in areas such as reading, writing and speaking.

Another participant (F-3) shared his personal development as follows:

> Especially when I am working in village schools, I should have knowledge about this subject since I will be teaching this lesson. I used to feel inadequate in foreign language teaching and I used to think that I could not teach this lesson. Now I do not feel the same because I think I can do it too thanks to the methods and techniques we have learned. I believe that I can teach English to my students if there is no English teacher in the school where I am assigned.

Classroom management

This category focuses on developing skills essential for managing a foreign language classroom effectively. It also addresses perspectives on teaching methods and strategies that contribute to a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere. Many participants indicated that the course

significantly improved their ability to manage English classes more effectively. Moreover, some participants reported that they gained confidence in what they could do when they were challenged with the different needs of their students. For example, a participant (M-3) explained:

> I learned about classroom management and teaching methods. My peers' presentations helped me understand how to adapt my approach to different grade levels and how I should manage the classroom.

Another participant (F-6) stated the following about the difficulties she faced in classroom management:

> Throughout the course we learned different language teaching methods, but I found it difficult to carry out some activities when my English skills were insufficient. Maintaining students' motivation and addressing different learning styles were the most challenging aspects for me. I realized that I needed more experience in classroom management.

Similarly, a participant (F-14) stated the following,

> It was difficult to engage all students, especially those who were more shy or had different learning styles. I would have liked more guidance on how to differentiate my teaching.

Course Applications

The "Course Practices" theme focuses on the teaching strategies, approaches and materials introduced and used during the course. The findings revealed that participants made significant progress in the context of two categories: Teaching methods and material utilization.

Teaching methods

The category of teaching methods highlights the teaching approaches that future teachers learn to effectively foster student participation in language learning. Participants emphasized the importance of adapting different teaching methodologies to realize language teaching in different learning needs and classroom settings. Many participants indicated that their ability to assess the advantages and disadvantages of different language teaching approaches and methods had improved. They also reported that they are capable of adapting and applying those methods and techniques to the classroom conditions in which they will work. They stated that the course increased their confidence in choosing between and applying methods such as communicative language teaching, grammar-translation method and eclectic approaches. A pre-service teacher (F-4) shared her views as follows:

> I was surprised to discover how many different teaching methods there are. The course really helped me to try different approaches and find what works best for me.

Similarly, another participant (M-2) emphasized the importance of the practical parts of the course:

> I think it was much better for us to be involved in in-class practices. I saw how learning outcomes can be taught in different ways through practical experiences. It was important for me to practice and not just rely on theoretical knowledge.

Material utilization

The category of use of materials relates to the resources and materials to be used when teaching languages in primary schools. It focuses on pre-service teachers' skills in selecting, creating and applying appropriate teaching materials that support language teaching and make learning more

interactive and engaging. According to the findings, some participants reported developing skills to effectively use and adapt teaching materials for language teaching. One participant (E-14) stated the following about the use of materials:

> I think I have gained experience on how to use materials such as songs and videos in teaching English. Adapting some materials to the needs of the students can make the lessons more interesting.

Another participant (F-9) shared the following about this issue:

> I think my ability to use the teaching materials we have seen in other courses in language teaching has increased. I learned that especially digital materials are important.

However, in some cases, some difficulties with the use of materials were identified. A participant (M-1) stated the following on the subject:

> Sometimes I found it difficult to explain grammar points or answer students' questions in English. It would have been useful to have more opportunities to practice my own language skills and to have more opportunities to identify child-centered materials in terms of material selection.

Recommendations

The final theme, "Suggestions," focuses on the participants' recommendations for enhancing the course's effectiveness. This theme includes the following categories: Practical experience and diverse materials.

Practical experience

The practical experience category relates to the need for more hands-on teaching opportunities and the inclusion of real classroom scenarios in the FLTPS course. The majority of participants emphasized the importance of making the course more practice-oriented. Participants suggested including real-life classroom applications and opportunities to interact with primary school students. One participant (F-11) shared the following:

> It was great that we learned through the presentations, but it would be even better if we could apply what we learned in primary schools. For example, with the teacher's permission, we could have tutored students during our internships to better grasp the application of what we learned.

A participant (M-5) stated that the practical parts of the FLTPS course were important and that it was important for them to practice teaching English in the schools they went to for teaching practice:

> I think it would have been more useful if we could have done the presentations not at the university but in the primary schools where we went for the practice!

Diverse materials

The diverse materials category refers to the variety of materials that participants felt should be included in the course. Some of the participants suggested diversifying the course materials to make the lessons more engaging and practical. Suggestions included the inclusion of games and songs related to language games and technology-assisted teaching tools for the teaching experience. One participant (F-10) stated the following,

There could be more variety of in class activities. For example, we could learn an English learning game and some real English songs. Or some Web 2 kinda tools that we can use in the classroom.

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

This article reports a study investigating the views of pre-service classroom teachers on the FLTPS course. Four major themes identified: Course Expectations, Learning Outcomes and Skills, Course Applications, and Suggestions. The findings provide insight into challenges and areas to improve that pre-service teachers experience. Data show that teacher candidates want theoretical and practical balance with emphasis on core pedagogical theories. This points to the requirement for practice-based materials in teacher education curricula and more learning opportunities. Teacher education effectiveness can be improved if the gap between theory and practice is bridged (Mutlu, 2017; Bulut & Atabey, 2016).

The focus of the participants on practical experience resonates with Dewey's experiential learning theory, where learning is appreciated through active participation. Practical experiences thus enable the pre-service teachers to put into practice their theoretical knowledge and earn confidence in teaching (Anderson & Stillman, 2013). They also reported appreciating activities that provided interactive learning combined with theory and teaching practice. Indeed, Çapan et al. (2024) found that FLTPS course improved pedagogical skills of the primary school teacher candidates, while Tekin (2023) reported an increasing confidence level in teacher candidates; however, some areas required improvements, particularly related to teaching experience in primary schools.

It is very typical for the challenges in teacher education to include catering to different learning needs and keeping students interested in the learning process. Some research clearly outlines that adding classroom management styles during teacher education can support teachers in creating proper learning environments for diverse students (Rowan et al., 2020; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). Knowing a variety of pedagogical methodologies emphasized the importance of flexibility in foreign language instruction. Such ability in choosing among different methods, such as the communicative language teaching and grammar-translation methods, would better prepare teachers for the diversity of classroom situations. This reflects the need for adaptive expertise, where teachers can tailor their teaching according to students' needs (Xiang et al., 2022). Participants revealed a development in the selection and adaptation of materials for young children. Multimodal materials, like music and video, enabled active learning. Further training in materials development and digital literacy is needed (Kayumova & Sadykova, 2019). Many participants called for more 'practicums' or teaching practice, for example, teaching in real primary classrooms. Previous studies indicate that participation in internships and field practical experiences builds confidence and readiness among pre-service teachers (Kosnik & Beck, 2003; Parveen & Mirza, 2012). More teaching opportunities in primary schools would enable teachers to put their skills into practice in real settings. In addition, respondents indicated the need for more varied teaching resources as a means of generating more interest in foreign language teaching. These will make students more motivated, and in turn, language learning will be livelier with games, songs, and technology.

The findings are consistent with some existing literature on the role that technology and gamification play in second language learning (Wang & Vásquez, 2012; Roy, 2023; Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli, 2021; Genç & Kırmızıbayrak, 2024). Additionally, this study underlines the need

for balance between theoretical knowledge, practice, and material design in the curriculum of teacher education. A curriculum that uses scholarly material, is exercised with hands-on activities, includes diversified pedagogical strategies, and resource development would be better positioned to address experiences of teachers. Sustained professional development will support teachers in meeting the evolving demands of the classroom (Allen & Wright, 2014; Tang et al., 2018; Rasmussen & Rash-Christensen, 2015).

This study enlightens the processes through which pre-service teachers are prepared to teach foreign languages. By addressing the weaknesses and capitalizing on the strengths, the teacher preparation programs can better prepare teachers for the primary school classrooms. These findings are consistent with other studies that investigate the challenges associated with primary and English teachers in foreign language teaching in relation to inadequacy of materials and professional competencies (Zengin & Ulaş, 2020). The study gives credence to the notion that the use of similar methods would enhance foreign language teaching outcomes. Finally, future teachers suggested the FLTPS course needs updating to include more technology use. However, digital tools in language teaching play a key role in helping children learn languages (Peachey, 2018). Participants also suggested the need for training in creating digital content and materials for language teaching. Peachey (2018) emphasizes that teacher education should definitely include how to use technology.

Curriculum evaluation helps determine how effective the curricula are in achieving their objectives (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2016). The effectiveness of the FLTPS course at developing teachers' competencies needs to be scanned with indispensable care. A proper balance between theory and experiential learning activities within the course can effectively lead to meaningful educational development for pre-service teachers. Curriculum design should be embarked upon based on practical applications that have been well deducted from needs and preference analysis of learners (Tyler, 2013). In this vein, a reform of the FLTPS course is quite imperative for meeting teachers' expectations and needs. Regular curriculum evaluations can help improve teacher education curriculum (Stufflebeam, 2003). The findings suggest that the needs of pre-service teachers should to be addressed much more in teacher education curriculum, particularly in foreign language teaching. More practical content in the curriculum, updated teaching materials, and the use of technology will enhance professional development (Demir, 2020; Kilinc, 2016).

These improvements will help teacher candidates meet course goals and prepare them for the challenges of teaching foreign languages in primary schools. Future research should include larger groups and experiments comparing different teaching methods. Long-term studies could trace how the FLTPS course influences the professional development of teachers (İnci & Yıldız, 2021). Such studies may yield important insights into how teacher education influences classroom practice and student outcomes over time. Many participants found the course useful and helped them understand the basic principles of language teaching. Including children's language development content enhances the pedagogical knowledge of the candidates (Lindgren & Enever, 2017). Participants' suggestions include adding more practical activities, lesson plans, and children's material to the course. This indicates that a language teaching course with only theoretical content does not help develop practical skills in teachers (Kim, 2023). Nunan (2017) also urges more scope for practical components in foreign language teaching curricula. Some of the student teachers enjoyed the interactive nature of the course, while there are some who wanted even more practical activities. Rich (2019) emphasizes that classroom-

based activities are important for the professional development of student teachers. Such methods as role-playing, group work, and drama in language teaching can help teachers engage with teach more productively (Ellis, 2020). Organizing the curriculum to include more in-class activities will help future teachers to improve their teaching skills.

In conclusion, this study highlights the preeminence of understanding the stance of pre-service teachers in relation to the FLTPS course. Teacher education for primary school level needs to be upgraded to meet the needs and expectations of pre-service teachers. Reforming the curriculum to include a greater focus on classroom practices will help in the professional development of pre-service teachers with regard to foreign language teaching (Pan & Akay, 2015).

Based on the results of the study, the following can be suggested:

- Organizing workshops and seminars focusing on contemporary foreign language teaching methods to keep pre-service teachers informed of the latest developments in the field.

- Increasing the number of practical teaching activities, including micro-teaching sessions where pre-service teachers can apply theoretical knowledge in simulated classroom environments.

- Integrating technology-supported teaching methods into the curriculum to familiarize pre- service teachers with digital tools that can facilitate foreign language acquisition.

- To provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to participate in real English language teaching alongside their core courses during their teaching practicum, thus enabling them to gain valuable first-hand experience in foreign language teaching.

Ethics Statements

This study was conducted in full compliance with ethical standards, ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality of all participants. Ethical approval was obtained from Kilis 7 Aralık University Ethics Committee prior to data collection.

Conflict of Interest

The author has no financial or personal relationships that may have influenced the research, authorship or publication of this article.

Informed Consent

Signed informed consent forms were gathered from each participant in this research.

Data availability

The anonymized datasets analyzed during this study are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding author, subject to ethical approval.

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Exploring Five Modes of Thinking for Qualitative Data Analysis on Ikeda Studies

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Abstract

Purpose: This article presents an overview of Freeman's (2017) five modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis (i.e., categorical, narrative, dialectical, poetic, and diagrammatical), along with concrete examples of how each mode can be applied to analyze Daisaku Ikeda's 42 peace dialogues with global leaders and scholars. The article addresses why it is essential to understand Ikeda's peace dialogues through multiple modes of thinking and what constituent dimensions of peace are exemplified in Ikeda's dialogues.

Method: The research included a qualitative data analysis, specifically a document analysis. This included finding and collecting Ikeda's published dialogues, 42 of which met the three criteria (i.e., English language availability, dialogues that cover peace-related topics, and the accuracy of their source). Self-reflexivity was used to critically examine our own limitations and beliefs regarding data collection and analysis.

Findings: The findings suggest that adopting multiple modes of thinking is advantageous in providing a more expansive perspective of the dialogues and fostering relational and creative epistemological interweaving during the data analysis process.

Implications for Research and Practice: Future research could build upon the findings of the present study by further analyzing and comparing the different modes of thinking used in the quantitative data analysis of Ikeda's dialogues on peace and beyond.

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Introduction

One person inspiring another, transcending all differences—

this is the basis of changing society at the most fundamental level.

Daisaku Ikeda

Daisaku Ikeda (1928-2023) was a prominent philosopher, peacebuilder, educator, author, and poet. He was the third president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) and founder of Soka (value-creating) schools and universities worldwide. He established several international institutions to promote peace, culture, and education. Ikeda was a prolific writer who published over 250 translated works. He received honorary citizenship from more than 800 cities and 409 honorary doctorates globally. He had made tenacious efforts to promote peace through dialogues, lectures, publications, peace proposals, and university speeches (Daisaku Ikeda Official Website, 2024a).

Ikeda's philosophy of Soka humanism is a new field of study that has emerged in recent years. Soka humanism, also referred to by Ikeda as "Buddhist humanism," reflects the perspective that human beings hold the capacity within themselves for positive transformation. Academic organizations such as the American Educational Research Association (AERA), DePaul University's Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education, and the Ikeda Center for Peace, Learning, and Dialogue, to name a few, are attracting international scholars and educators to gather and exchange their research findings and clinical experiences related to Soka humanism. Research studies have also been published in referred journals to address Ikeda's philosophy, covering various aspects such as global citizenship (Goulah, 2020; Williams, 2020), value creation and value-creating education (Goulah, 2021), happiness (Kuo et al., 2020), children's literature (Kuo & Kubicki, 2022), and curriculum design (Kuo & Ramsey, 2021; Kuo et al., 2021). Although Ikeda had engaged in dialogues on peace with many global leaders, no research has used multiple modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis to analyze his peace dialogues. Given dialogue as the path to peace, exploring this area is not only beneficial for educators in Ikeda studies but also for the education field as a whole.

This article provides an overview of Freeman's (2017) five modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis, along with concrete examples of how each mode can be applied to analyze Ikeda's peace dialogues. The present study aims to answer the research question: Why is it essential to understand Ikeda's peace dialogues through multiple modes of thinking? More specifically, what are the constituent dimensions of peace exemplified in Ikeda's dialogues?

The Five Modes of Thinking for Qualitative Data Analysis

Categorical Thinking

Categorical thinking is defined as "thinking that seeks to determine what something is, or is about, and creates order to the resulting categories," which serves "a classificatory function for analysis" (Freeman, 2017, p. 7). When doing categorical thinking, Freeman (2017) emphasizes the importance of revisiting the connections between codes and categories to understand how codes are linked, along with the relationships among the categories themselves. It is noteworthy

that research findings "do not spontaneously emerge without thoughtful, methodical data analysis process taking place first" (Galman, 2013, p. 12). A thoughtful and systematic coding process will likely lead to effective and meaningful data classification.

Just like people use "buckets" to organize "objects" based on their similarities, qualitative researchers utilize "categories" to organize "data." Researchers employing "deductive buckets" assign labels to each bucket based on predetermined theory. Conversely, those utilizing "inductive buckets" group similar concepts together and then determine appropriate labels. Researchers using "abductive buckets" determine labeling based on the situation and inquiry, which is known as relationship-driven analysis. This balanced approach enables researchers to navigate between existing theories and new information. However, Brinkmann (2014) cautions that waiting for breakdowns, existential situations, estrangement, and abductive reasoning may increase the complexity of the analytical process and prolong the project's completion time.

Narrative Thinking

Narrative thinking interconnects elements, offering details and coherence to the overarching story. Researchers who use narrative thinking often connect plot elements to craft a story, similar to how people connect dots to create an image. Interestingly, even with the same dots, individuals may weave different pictures from these dots, depending on the paths their thoughts guide them to connect the dots. This indicates that narrative thinking upholds that truth is not absolute but rather interpretative. It challenges the dominant knowledge paradigms and reshapes people's views by understanding lived experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Interpretation, a meaning-making process, seeks to make sense of data through spoken or written language. Ricoeur (1984) argues that interpretation is relational and temporal, influenced by human relationships and time. Individuals interpret things differently from time to time and across people and situations. For instance, in Tallent et al.'s (2021) interview study, Black youths who had experienced detention criticized white supremacy in schools for failing them. However, when reflecting on their own traditions, they seemed to become self-condemned and internalize societal norms. Learning from such narratives and counternarratives is educational, informing the actions adults can take to support Black youths. It is essential to note that not all shifts in narratives or counternarratives are inherently negative. Rather than viewing narrative shifts as a problem or something that needs to be fixed, sometimes it is required to acknowledge individuals' continual connections with their evolving environments (Fabos et al., 2021).

Because narratives are a mode of thinking, researchers need to help readers understand the underlying thought process of the story rather than merely a representation of a story. Freeman (2017) argues that one unique contribution of narrative thinking is "how this mediation provides social science researchers with a way in which to theorize an interdependent relation between the particularities of human existence and the general condition of being human" (p. 37). Ontology (i.e., what we know) and epistemology (i.e., how we know what we know) are the essence of narrative research. Narratives commonly use storytelling, everyday human talk, as a tool to interpret data. While readers may already be familiar with this approach, it is worth mentioning how contextual factors, such as personality, relationships, politics, and cultures, play a role in shaping the construction of storytelling (Freeman, 2017).

Dialectical Thinking

Dialectical Thinking is a "form of relational thinking oriented toward change. It builds from categorical and narrative thinking, rejecting the aim of both to move human inquiry toward transformative action" (Freeman, 2017, p. 46). Dialectical thinking engages in dialogues to address and transform tensions or contradictions. In other words, categorical and narrative thinking only allows us to know what is already out there and how we know about it. To move from understanding the world to transforming it, researchers must obtain knowledge to investigate the essence of the world so that they can exert their creativity to intervene or interrupt an entrenched system practically. This mode of thinking allows researchers to explore "counter-stories" and rethink what might not be true in previous assumptions.

Freeman (2017) identified several key characteristics of dialectical thinking. One idea is that everything is interconnected, comprised of dynamic and intersecting parts. This interconnectedness suggests that changes result from interactions between living and nonliving organisms. Additionally, the movement of change is cyclical and continuous, working both with and against this movement to navigate its complexities. Ho (2000) argues that dialectical thinking "seeks to resolve contradictions, leading to higher levels of understanding" (p. 1065). Dialectical thinking can be carried out through two common methods – dialogue (exchanging information) and discourse (delivering information), both of which can promote logical argumentation (Freeman, 2017). Through dialogue, individuals exchange their perspectives and actively listen to better understand different viewpoints. Discourse, on the other hand, involves presenting information in a structured and persuasive manner. Both methods are essential for promoting logical argumentation and encouraging individuals to consider multiple perspectives.

Poetic Thinking

Poetic thinking emphasizes the interconnected relationships among thoughts, bodies, and feelings. It "is not about art per se, but about unleashing our perceptual, aesthetical capacities for sensual knowing" (Freeman, 2017, p. 72). It encompasses felt experience, immersing ourselves in the sensuous flow as experiencing beings. This shift moves us "from an epistemological and representational form of knowing to an ontological one" (Freeman, 2017, p. 72). Poetic inquiry, an arts-based methodology, encourages creativity and deep engagement with qualitative data, viewing arts and poetry as vital ways to express and learn. It fosters imaginative and creative expressions, particularly for something hard to reach, feel, or express (Brown et al., 2021).

Poetic thinking is grounded in the belief that understanding qualitative data goes beyond just interpreting text. It involves experiencing and applying it within the meaningful relationships that shape one's world. By employing poetic thinking, we can move beyond a purely cognitive understanding of data and engage with it in a vivid, heartfelt, and profound way. This mode of thinking involves applying our felt experience to gain a richer and deeper understanding of the world around us.

Diagrammatical Thinking

Diagrammatic thinking encourages researchers to view different theories and contradictory stories as "part of overlapping but potentially different topologies" (Freeman, 2017, p. 97). Ko and Bal (2019) use the tree-like, rhizomatic metaphor to help researchers understand "the generative interconnectedness of individuals and their context within diverse goals, histories, and practices in collective activity systems" (p. 5). In essence, diagrammatical thinking raises awareness of plausible binaries, encouraging researchers to see connections without a centralizing taproot of the data. Blurring boundaries between seemingly contradictory data or theories can lead to transformative work, opening possibilities for adaptive and innovative transformation, which Deleuze and Guattari (1987) refer to the rhizomatic design of research as nomadism. Ko and Bal (2019) suggest that "like a nomad constantly moving to find a new land of possibility, rhizomatic design galvanizes local stakeholders to become generative nomads, capable of drawing lines of flight away from the normative ideology deeply embedded in the tree-like system" (p. 16). Recognizing diffractive connections gives hope that each person is an agent in their context, capable of acting for the betterment without compromising their earnest view of life. According to Freeman (2017), diagrammatical thinking encourages thinking altogether; that is, the world does not preexist the research, so it is not about creating new paths within reality but about world-making itself. The act of research itself is about making sense or constructing the meaning of the world.

In summary, *categorical thinking* simplifies data by grouping objects based on defining attributes, allowing for easy identification and comparison. *Narrative thinking* connects themes into coherent stories, sees interconnectedness and rich variations of human experience-making, values practical domains of human action, and expands individual experiences to a broader community. *Dialectical thinking* uncovers tensions in humans and society, promotes a deeper understanding of complexities, and puts the theory into action for change. *Poetical thinking* explores life experiences, goes beyond conventional meaning, expands the imagination, and envisions the unthought-of. *Diagrammatical thinking* reconceptualizes human and non-human interactions as transversal forces without predetermined aims, disrupting established thinking and engineering new articulations of the encounters between diverse data and theories (Freeman, 2017).

Methods

Data Collection

Ikeda's peace dialogues with global leaders and scholars are the primary data source for this study. To set boundaries for the data and ensure its accessibility and relevance, we have selected Ikeda's published dialogue books based on three criteria. Firstly, the books are available in English, enabling researchers to review and duplicate the study. Secondly, the dialogues cover peace-related topics, which align with the purpose of the study. Lastly, the books are listed on the Daisaku Ikeda Official Website at https://www.daisakuikeda.org/sub/resources/records/dialog.html to ensure their accuracy. Of all Ikeda's published dialogues, 42 met the criteria.

Data Analysis

Document analysis is utilized in the present study. Document analysis refers to using and analyzing permanent products (i.e., Ikeda's peace dialogue books). Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as "a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating printed and electronic documents. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge." (p. 27). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state that documents as data include "a wide range of written, visual, digital, and physical materials relevant to the study…" (pp. 162-163). For the present study, documents as data included Ikeda's peace dialogue books as well as Freeman's book on the five modes of thinking in order to collect data towards our research question and better understand the multiple ways that Ikeda's peace dialogues can be analyzed and interpreted. The benefits of using document analysis include efficient collection, cost-effectiveness, availability, lack of obtrusiveness and reactivity, stability, exactness, and coverage (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It also raises fewer ethical concerns compared with other qualitative methods like interviews and observations. Documents are situated products, so their functions may change depending on the context. Therefore, it is essential to analyze documents in context (Prior, 2003). Furthermore, analyzing data from different perspectives enables a more comprehensive and nuanced interpretation. In this study, we used a research design that focused on Ikeda's peace dialogues, applying the five modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis as described by Freeman (2017).

Subjectivity Statement/Reflexivity

Our language ability and research preference have influenced our selection of Ikeda's dialogues. Since we cannot read the original Japanese versions, we have had to rely on translated versions in English. This means that our research does not include all of Ikeda's dialogues. However, we believe that the 42 dialogues provide representative data for addressing our research question. Additionally, our research preference for peace has led us to focus only on Ikeda's dialogues on peace rather than other equally important topics like self-development, well-being, relationships, ethics, religion, climate change, or leadership.

Regarding the validity of our study, since these dialogues are publicly accessible, other researchers can easily examine them. To increase the trustworthiness of our work, we have incorporated several ways, such as transparency and data interrogation (Dahal, 2023; Galman, 2013; Li & Ross, 2021; Preissle, 2008). Furthermore, we recognize how societal expectations and existing theories may shape our interpretations of Ikeda's peace dialogues. Therefore, we utilize "self-reflexivity" and "analysis as theorizing" to monitor our data analysis process and maintain an open mind as we explore Ikeda's profound work.

Findings

The following findings provide an overview of the potential benefits of engaging in Ikeda's dialogues using various modes of thinking: categorical, narrative, dialectical, poetic, and diagrammatical.

Categorical Thinking

The deductive approach is a theory-based, top-down data analysis approach that uses existing theories to generate categories for predicting, confirming, or disconfirming the data (Ashworth et al., 2019; Brinkmann, 2014; de Farias et al., 2021). In the present study, the theory that guides our research on Ikeda's dialogues is his Soka (value-creating) humanism, which views humanity as a key and fundamental principle for world peace. The assumptions rooted in Soka humanism include: 1) each person possesses the inherent dignity to live; 2) the changes in a single individual will change the destiny of all humankind; 3) globalization increases our awareness of interconnected lives; 4) humanity can be fostered through education and dialogue; and 5) all actions and decisions must be made based on their impact on human lives (Daisaku Ikeda Official Website, 2024b).

Drawing upon the tenets of the theory, we turn this list into five categories for analyzing Ikeda's dialogues on peace: inherent dignity, human revolution, global citizenship, education and dialogue, and sustainable development. The inclusion criteria for each category are: 1) human dignity: the fundamental concepts encompass dignity, ethics, justice, human rights, and nonviolence; 2) human revolution: integral concepts comprise life purpose, value creation, inner power, and transformation from within; 3) global citizenship: the interconnectedness and interdependence of all life, cultural competence, coexistence, compassion, and a sense of responsibility; 4) education and dialogue: human education, peace education, mutual growth, and dialogue for peace; and 5) sustainable development: humanitarian competition, leaders as peacemakers, dedication to good, and nurturing youth. Table 1 shows an overview of the deductive categories along with their corresponding inclusion criteria.

Table 1

*An Overview of the Deductive Categories, Definition, and Inclusion Criteria*

Deductive Category	Human Dignity	Human Revolution	Global Citizenship	Education and Dialogue	Sustainable Development
Definition	Each person possesses the inherent dignity to live.	The changes in a single individual will change the destiny of a nation and all humankind.	Globalization increases our awareness of our existence in a broader world community.	Humanity is fostered through education and dialogue.	All actions and decisions must be based on their impact on human lives.
Inclusion Criteria	-dignity -ethics -justice -human rights -nonviolence	-life purpose -value creation -inner power -the transformation from within	-interconnectedness and interdependence of all life -cultural competence -coexistence -compassion -a sense of responsibility	-human education -peace education -mutual growth -dialogue for peace	-humanitarian competition -leaders as peacemakers -dedication to good -nurturing youth

In contrast, the inductive approach is a data-based, bottom-up approach that delves into the data to identify categories for addressing the research question (Ashworth et al., 2019; Brinkmann, 2014; de Farias et al., 2021). We start with an open coding process to see what makes sense analytically. We read through Ikeda's dialogue books to explore how peace is discussed in their dialogues. When reviewing Ikeda's dialogue books, we write memos in the margins. Memo writing is an analytical strategy that facilitates researchers to extract meaning from the data,

maintain momentum, and make comments on the data (Birks et al., 2008). Then, we develop categories to cluster the codes. Figure 1 illustrates the codes and their associated inductive categories.

Figure 1

The Codes and Their Inductive Categories
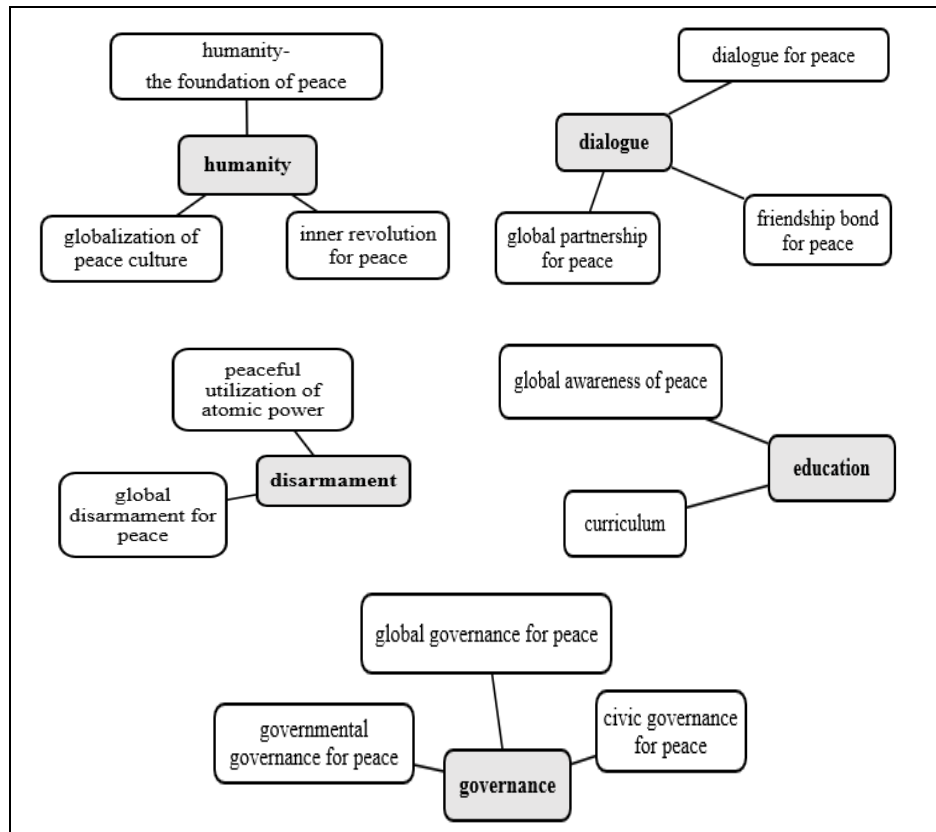
While using the inductive approach is time-consuming in analyzing Ikeda's peace dialogues, it increases our sensitivity to the data. This involves meticulously examining the dialogues, analyzing them line by line, and jotting down memos as we progress. As Sipe and Ghiso (2004) state, "Building conceptual categories is an intellectual challenge that demands all the creative energies researchers can bring to the task; it is not a dull and mechanical exercise at any point. If it becomes so, then something is probably very wrong" (p. 482). We keep this quote in mind when coding data, so whenever we feel stressed or overwhelmed by data analysis, we know it signals a need for adjustments or revisions in our data analysis.

To improve the practicality of using the inductive approach, we first focus on indicators such as book titles, prefaces, chapters, and the index to pinpoint discussions on peace in the dialogues. Instead of reading each dialogue book entirely, these indicators serve as multiple filters to ensure comprehensive coverage while excluding sections unrelated to peace. In this open coding process, we categorize data without being constrained by any predetermined theory.

Narrative Thinking

In Ikeda's peace dialogues with global leaders, the central themes explored in categorical thinking above include reviving humanity, respecting human dignity, promoting global citizenship, fostering a sustainable society, and cultivating friendship through dialogue. We develop a narrative based on these themes in the following:

> Ikeda and his interlocutors encourage people to start from where they are and from the person in front of them to create a better world. They believe the ripple effect of a single person's human revolution will impact lives on a larger scale. Because Ikeda and his interlocutors have experienced the firsthand impacts of childhood wars, they recognize the importance of disarmament in respecting human dignity. To ensure disarmament, they advocate for promoting global citizenship to govern local, national, and international security measures. Moreover, they stress the importance of education and dialogue in raising capable people, especially youths, and fostering friendships to sustain the efforts for peace.

The relationship between ontology (what we know) and epistemology (how we know what we know) lies at the heart of narrative thinking. Researchers utilize narrative thinking to create stories that help make sense of complex meanings. The above narrative not only enhances understanding but also serves as a valuable resource for individuals interested in exploring Ikeda's work, especially for those who may not know where to start. By weaving together the key themes and recounting the story behind Ikeda's peace dialogues, we are able to appreciate the resolute perseverance that Ikeda demonstrated through his sincere dialogues. This narrative enables us to perceive the interplay between the dialogues, Ikeda, his interlocutors, and ourselves. This is an ongoing process and we still need to keep building the inductive codes with categorical thinking until these codes connect into a coherent narrative or grounded theory.

Dialectical Thinking

Dialectical thinking encourages researchers to approach information from multiple aspects and reconsider their perspectives in light of new information, prompting them to take transformative actions (Freeman, 2017). As Freeman suggests, engaging in dialogues that explore differences would foster dialectical thinking in studies on Ikeda's peace dialogues. Instead of simply asking why peace is important, researchers employing dialectical thinking would inquire into the reasons why peace is challenging to achieve. For example, what are the tensions evoked by global leaders in their attempts to implement peace? What interests prevent the fulfillment of peace dialogues?

Dialectical thinking allows researchers to promote peace by understanding the tensions within individuals and society. It encourages a deeper understanding of complexities and helps translate theoretical concepts into actionable change. A notable example of this is Ikeda's dialogue, "Choose Peace," which was published in collaboration with Johan Galtung (1930-2024), a Norwegian sociologist known as the father of peace studies. Both Ikeda and Galtung lived through World War II and carried painful childhood memories, but they transformed their personal tragedies into a commitment to global peace. Their dialogues address global issues and emphasize the importance of compassion and love to foster connections and nonviolence. Their exchanges not only draw inspiration from each other but also encourage a wider audience, expanding the possibilities for action on a global scale.

Poetic Thinking

According to the Ikeda Center (2024), the concept of the poetic heart or spirit is one of Ikeda's most original contributions to the philosophy of peacebuilding. In his message to the center in 2009, Ikeda described the poetic mind as one that "fuses the pulse of the human heart with the rhythm of nature and the universe," which he considers the "source of human imagination and creativity" (Ikeda Center, 2024). Ikeda firmly believes that fostering dialogue and education is essential for bringing people together and revitalizing our shared humanity. Throughout his life, he dedicated himself to engaging in peace dialogues with global leaders across fields. To honor Ikeda's contributions to world peace, we have composed a poem to express our profound gratitude and convey the purpose of our research on his peace dialogues.

<div align="center">

Peace

a desire in everyone's heart

is not something far apart.

This desire leads us to

compassionate dialogue,

shining brightly as the sun of hope.

On the eternal journey of

mentor and disciple,

we continue sharing

our great mentor's life.

Taking his dialogue

to the next level

for peace and happiness to prevail.

</div>

Before developing our poetic thinking, we often prioritized extracting messages from Ikeda's dialogues, overlooking the deeper sentiments embedded in his poems. Through exploring Ikeda's poetry and composing our own, we have come to appreciate the powerful imagery that his poems can evoke. We also tap into a deeper understanding of how peace became his life's noble responsibility and mission. We feel the emotions and the profound love that Ikeda seeks to communicate through his dialogues.

Diagrammatical Thinking

Ikeda's peace dialogues can be meaningfully examined using hermeneutics (i.e., the study of interpretation) within the context of diagrammatical thinking. For instance, the two philosophical perspectives of German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) and Japanese philosopher Daisaku Ikeda (1928-2023), one rooted in hermeneutics and the other in Soka humanism, have common ground in their views on human lives, but they also have distinct emphases. By employing diagrammatical thinking, it is possible to discern and appreciate their interconnectedness more clearly. Here are the quotes associated with their work.

> The understanding and interpretation of texts is not merely a concern of science, but obviously belongs to human experience of the world in general.

Being born human does not make one a human being. Don't we really only become human when we make tenacious effort to live as human beings?

The distinction between the two quotes lies in Gadamer's emphasis on the practical nature of human perception, the role of language and mediation in shaping understanding, and the application of understanding as the soul of the hermeneutic experience. On the other hand, Ikeda's philosophy focuses on human beings' inherent dignity, positive transformation, and the value of everyday actions and interactions in effecting changes. Despite these differences, both quotes share similarities regarding human agency (the intra-action; the ability to act and effect changes), the practical aspects of human existence, and individuals' transformative capacity. Both Gadamer and Ikeda highlight the central role of human experience and its potential for positive impact on a global scale. Recognizing this interconnectedness inspires us to become better researchers and practitioners of Ikeda studies. We value the philosophical viewpoints of both Gadamer and Ikeda, as we recognize their mutual yet unique dedication to enhancing human existence through philosophical hermeneutics and human revolution.

Discussion

This article provides an overview of our analysis of Ikeda's peace dialogues through different modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis. We specifically focus on identifying the core aspects of peace within his dialogues. Figure 2 illustrates our thought process in constructing arguments for using multiple modes of thinking in the analysis of Ikeda's peace dialogues.

Figure 2

Building Arguments for the Present Study
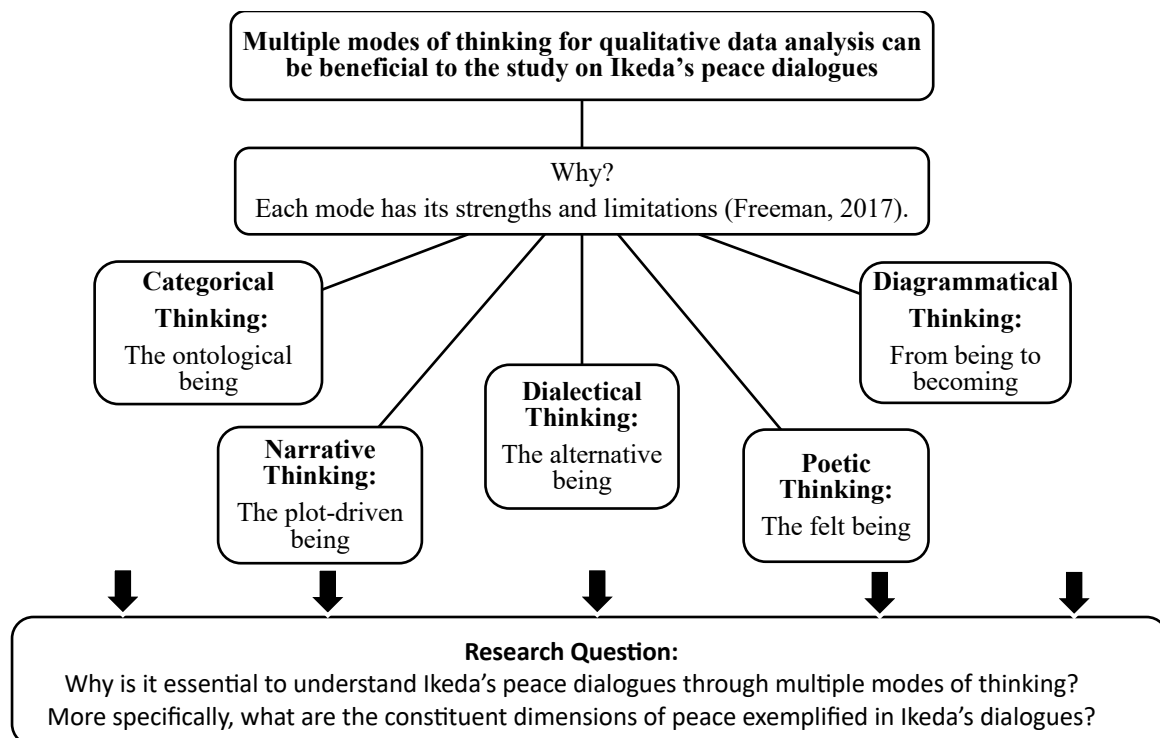
Different modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis are grounded in different philosophical perspectives and subjectivity. By employing multiple modes of thinking, researchers and practitioners in the field of Ikeda studies can consider various aspects of his peace dialogues and effectively utilize the strengths of each approach. This can prevent overlooking diverse aspects of the data. Moreover, the different modes of thinking foster discussions among individuals with diverse perspectives on analyzing Ikeda's dialogues. This article includes the applications of each mode of thinking, which provides researchers with different approaches to analyzing Ikeda's peace dialogues.

Categorical Thinking. The deductive approach is practical in analyzing Ikeda's peace dialogues, allowing for a better understanding of the main themes covered in the dialogues. However, the approach has its limitations as being prone to pre-determined categories, so the inductive approach is also used to enhance the breadth and depth of data analysis. Both approaches complemented each other, and the evidence drawn from both codes suggests that no outlier data emerged from these dialogues. The human-to-human rapport underlying Ikeda's dialogues with interlocutors may explain why similar perspectives are evoked among them, as Freire (1993) argues that genuine dialogue flourishes when individuals possess a profound love for the world and each other.

Narrative thinking. Freeman (2017) describes that this mode of thinking enables research to move beyond theories and methodologies and focus on connecting the "plots" identified in the data to form a story. Narratives allow researchers to capture the richness and complexity of human experience within social and cultural contexts. Using narrative thinking, we can see how all the themes discussed in Ikeda's peace dialogues are interconnected. Given that individuals' social and cultural contexts influence the connections between themes, different researchers studying Ikeda's philosophy may establish varying connections between the same themes, ultimately resulting in various interpretations of his peace dialogues.

Dialectical Thinking. The dialectical thinking approach encourages researchers to challenge dominant thought by examining issues from a different perspective. For instance, when analyzing Ikeda's peace dialogues, researchers could add an alternative perspective by exploring the tensions evoked by global leaders in their attempts to implement peace. They could also consider the interests that prevent the fulfillment of peace dialogues, aiming to understand the counter forces that prevent peace from happening.

Poetic Thinking. Poetic thinking is rooted in the philosophical foundation of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics reveals the essence of lived experience and constructs meaning that inspires the imagination and resonates with people's emotions (Green et al., 2021). Through this co-constructed process of knowledge, we do not just interpret Ikeda's peace dialogues but gain a deeper understanding of ourselves as researchers and the context in which we conduct the work. This approach allows us to feel Ikeda's emotions of fighting for peace, which is often overlooked in traditional research methods focusing solely on presenting facts.

Diagrammatical thinking. According to Freeman (2017), this mode of thinking involves using diffractive analyses to encourage experimentation rather than relying on a specific method. Instead of viewing different theories as dichotomous and separate, researchers use these distinct but overlapping features to effect a change. Analogously, knowledge consumers (learners) and knowledge creators (researchers/practitioners) have distinct yet constitutive roles. Researchers and practitioners who cease to learn will not generate groundbreaking work, and learners who

fail to apply their knowledge will not bring about meaningful change. This mode of thinking guides researchers in Ikeda studies to see how their work can change the world and how they are changed by the world through agency (the intra-actions).

Implications for Future Research

Our article does not suggest or advocate for any particular mode of thinking but instead engages Ikeda studies researchers in exploring and identifying their stance through the applications of different modes of thinking. As Freeman states, "Understanding the variety of modes of thinking for qualitative analysis is intended to support a deeper attention to analytic decision-making" (Freeman, 2017, p. xiv). While it is not feasible to fully explore the depth of Ikeda's peace dialogues in a single research study, this article provides a starting point for researchers interested in Ikeda studies to understand the different dimensions of peace exemplified by utilizing various modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis. The findings of the present study provide a basis for future research that may expand upon these results. Researchers can gain deeper insights and inform real-world applications by continue exploring the different modes of thinking used in the quantitative analysis of Ikeda's dialogues. While the results of this study offer some direction, we recognize that there is much more to discover in Ikeda's dialogues on peace and beyond. We hope this article gives some ideas to researchers who are passionate about Ikeda's dialogues to explore the areas that have not yet been fully studied.

Conclusion

We have found that using multiple modes of thinking for qualitative data analysis has been very beneficial by encouraging researchers to step out of their comfort zone, think more creatively, and see the data from multiple perspectives. While some modes may pose greater analytical challenges than others, the results provide a broader view of Ikeda's peace dialogues. This has not only enhanced researchers' ability to think critically and creatively in their academic pursuits, but has also deepened their admiration for Ikeda and his interlocutors, who demonstrate that ordinary people take action as change agents for world peace. As Alvarez-Hernandez and Flint (2023) argue, writing on research studies is not an individualistic process. It is "a relational and creative epistemological weaving of thoughts and embodiments constructed by researchers and their interactions with mentors and instructors, participants, and theoretical proponents" (p. 407). Research is a continuous process of connecting, understanding, and intricately weaving all the aspects involved. Initially, we relied on familiar methods to understand Ikeda's work, which limited our perspective to only one side of his peace dialogues. It is this process of *being* and *becoming* an academic, which the five modes of thinking offer, that leads us to deeply connect to Ikeda's dialogues and promote new thinking to one another built upon his work.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

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How Do Students Interpret Human Rights in Their Drawings?*

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Abstract

Purpose: In order for children to participate in life as citizens who know their rights, democracy and human rights education should be provided gradually at all educational stages. At the primary education level, human rights issues are included in the content of various courses, especially Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy, and Social Studies courses. Students' perceptions and knowledge of human rights at each level of education should be examined using different research methods. This study aimed to examine the perceptions of 4th grade students about human rights through their drawings.

Method: With the qualitative research approach, drawings on human rights of 4th grade students in a primary school with middle socio-economic students in a province in Türkiye and semi-structured interviews on these drawings were analyzed.

Findings: In their drawings, students mostly included their personal rights such as freedom of religion and conscience, freedom of thought and opinion, and privacy, which they experienced in their daily lives at home, school, and around, and then their rights to education and training, business life, and working conditions. Only one student has included the right to choose from political rights.

Implications: Teachers should address the issue of human rights in the education process by associating it with activities related to the family, school and environmental context and the daily lives of students. More comprehensive and in-depth research can be conducted at different grade levels in different socio-economic and cultural contexts that will reveal students' perceptions of human rights.

Keywords

human rights education, children, primary school

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Introduction

The human rights that a person should have at birth, regardless of race, religion, gender and age group, are based on the fight against injustice and oppression and the desire to build a better life. Human rights have become a powerful and effective discourse to defend, criticize and correct all kinds of thoughts and actions and are accepted as a universal standard worldwide.

Human rights, which were shaped by the fresh and traumatic memories of the war after World War II, have gradually become stronger and have reached the present day and become institutionalized (Şen, 2021). II The United Nations Organization (UN), which was established immediately after World War II, has been effective in drawing attention to human rights worldwide and becoming an important value in the international arena. Human rights, which took their place in our lives with the United Nations Charter (UN Charter) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (IHEB), then increased its power with the Convention on Civil and Political Rights (CPA) and the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) adopted in 1966 (Çelebi, 2012). Although human rights basically exist as a whole, various classifications have been made in order to better comprehend and analyze them. In a commonly used classification, human rights are discussed in two groups as classical and human rights by generation. In this classification, classical human rights are divided into three categories as negative status rights (protective rights), positive status rights (social rights) and active status rights (participation rights). Similarly, human rights according to generations are classified as first-generation (classical, traditional) rights, second-generation (social, economic and cultural) rights and third-generation (solidarity) rights (Sağlam, 2020). In the 1982 Constitution of Türkiye, human rights are classified under three headings: Rights and Duties of the Person, Social and Economic Rights and Duties, Political Rights and Duties (Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye 1982).

Democracy and human rights are two concepts that are related and directly related to each other. Democracy, which is a form of government, provides the most suitable environment for the realization of human rights, and human rights constitute the intellectual basis of democracy as a doctrine (Freeman, 2008: 82 and Beetham, 2013:153 as cited in Dolanbay 2016). The main way for democracy to be adopted and internalized by people with all its values and qualities is through democracy and human rights education (Aydeniz, 2010; Ersoy, 2017). With democracy and human rights education, schools have great responsibilities to raise individuals who understand the importance of democracy and its values and adopt them in their lives. In democratic countries, a significant part of citizenship education takes place as democracy and human rights education. Teaching students' human rights not only enables them to understand how poverty and violence arise, but also aims to improve their own lives as well as the lives of other people in world societies, against pressure and other forces that restrict people's lives and development. Therefore, education of human rights requires a broad human perspective that includes all human beings, especially beyond nation-specific approaches to citizenship and civil action.

The United Nations has addressed human rights education in three dimensions in its Declaration on Human Rights Education and Seminar published at the 2011 General Assembly, addressing the issue of democratic citizenship education, which goes beyond national and nationalist education, and how people around the world will protect their own and others' rights: I) Education about human rights aims to provide information about human rights principles and

mechanisms that protect human rights. II) Education through human rights aims to implement the rights of educators and students in educational environments. III) Education for human rights, on the other hand, enables students to learn by applying their own rights and supporting the struggle for the rights of others (UN, 2020, cited in Şen, 2021). However, there are four teaching methods commonly used in human rights education: didactic, participatory, empowerment, and activism. Didactic teaching is based on giving students the content of human rights as information. Participatory teaching enables students to take an active role by writing the rights-based constitution of an imaginary planet. Empowering teaching encourages students to be aware of their own subjectivity and strengths. The activism method, on the other hand, tries to create transformation by encouraging students to take part in human rights campaigns (Tibbitts, 2017, cited in Şen, 2021). Didactic teaching is teacher-centered and is based on having students memorize human rights content as information. Freire, criticizes the didactic teaching method and argues that students should stop being passive information recipients and become active thinkers. However, in the context of human rights education, this method is only used to teach basic knowledge in the classroom. For example, in the context of a teacher's human rights education, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights is explained in detail in the classroom by this method. This method may be effective in learning the basics of human rights concepts, but it limits student participation (Freire, 1970). Participatory teaching enables students to take an active role by writing the rights-based constitution of an imaginary planet. This model encourages students' active participation in the lesson. For example, in a class on human rights, students can be divided into small groups to discuss cases of violation of a right and offer solutions. This method is based on discussion and cooperation (Vvgotsky, 1978). Empowering teaching encourages students to be aware of their own subjectivity and strengths. In this method, students not only acquire knowledge, but also gain strength by applying what they have learned to their own lives. For example, a student community organizing an awareness campaign and preparing a petition about a local environmental problem is an example of empowering education (Hooks, 1994). The activism method, on the other hand, encourages students who are trying to create transformation and to take part in human rights campaigns. This method encourages students to take direct actions. Within the scope of human rights education, students' volunteering at a local human rights organization or starting a social media campaign can be given as an example (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Based on these teaching methods, three advanced teaching models are structured. These are "Values and Awareness Socialization Model ", "Accountability-Professional Development Model" and "Activism-Transformation Model". The first model includes didactic teaching of human rights content, the second model includes teaching people human rights as a professional ethics, and the third model includes defending the rights of groups whose rights are violated and teaching solidarity with them (Tibbitts, 2017, cited in Şen, 2021).

Although human rights education in Türkiye is generally included in curricula, it was given by traditional methods didactically. Human rights education in Türkiye during the Republican period started with the program of a course called "Malumat-ı Vataniye". It is seen that the course named "Dormitory Information" was taught in the primary education program between 1930-1985. Between 1985-1992, it was started to be taught under the name of "Citizenship Information" with the decision of the Board of Education (TCC). The "Citizenship Information" course, which was taught at the 2nd level of primary education on March 14, 1995, was taught under the name of "Citizenship and Human Rights Education" in the 8th grade of primary

education in the 1995-1996 academic year. In addition, it has taken its place as an elective course called "Democracy and Human Rights" in the programs of all primary education institutions. With the change made in Türkiye's education system in 1997, 8-year compulsory education practice started. On June 25, 1998, the Ministry of National Education decided to make the Citizenship and Human Rights Education course compulsory in the 7th and 8th grades of the second stage of primary education once a week (Gökburun, 2007). With the renewed Primary Education program in 2005, Citizenship and Human Rights has spread to all curricula as an intermediate discipline. It started to be taught as a compulsory course in 2010-2011. After 2012, this course was removed from 8 classes and started to be given as Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy in the 4th grade. Citizenship education continues to be given to 4th graders with the 2018 Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy Curriculum in 2024 (Durdi & Erdamar, 2020).

Education provided in primary education usually constitutes the general education level and general culture level of a society. During the primary education period, democracy and human rights education can be more concretely placed and internalized within the scope of the child's personal relations with his/her family, environment and society. In other words, the child learns about democracy and human rights through the relationships and daily life experiences he/she establishes around him/her. In this period, the feelings of trust and tolerance that form the basis of human rights culture should be placed. In this period, students should be ensured to value themselves and others, to recognize and respect human rights in daily life, to comprehend and express their own fundamental rights, to value and respect differences, to develop attitudes that can handle conflictual situations in a non-violent and respectful manner, to gain children's self-confidence, and to gain the skills to defend and develop human rights (Flowers et al., 2000, cited in Ersoy, 2017).

In primary school in Türkiye, 4th grade students acquire basic knowledge about democracy and human rights in "Social Studies" and "Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy" courses. The course "Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy" is designed for students to learn and internalize democracy and human rights. Within the scope of this course, concepts such as the rights and responsibilities of individuals, justice, equality and freedom are discussed. In the studies conducted, teachers stated that the content of the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy course is not suitable for the student level, the course hours should be increased and the course should be given by social studies teachers (Durdi & Erdamar, 2020). In addition, many studies have emphasized that if the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy course continues to be included in the primary school curriculum, its content should be restructured with a hands-on and experience-based learning approach, the textbook should be renewed, and the learning-teaching process with a program that will actively involve the student should be carried out with hands-on activities (Akçeşme & Fidan, 2021; Balbağ, Gürdoğan-Bayır & Ersoy, 2017).

Social Studies course in primary education, on the other hand, aims to provide the basic values necessary for students to participate effectively in social life. As expressed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), the main purpose of this course is to enable students to grow up as a respectful and democratic individual to human rights (NCSS, 2012). In the curriculum and content of the course, there are elements about the rights, duties and democratic processes that regulate the lives of individuals. However, it is seen that the concepts of human rights, freedoms and democratic practices are discussed in the course. In the studies conducted,

it has been observed that the values such as justice, peace, solidarity, equality, freedom, respect, love and patriotism in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum are directly related to the concepts of human rights and democracy. In addition, these concepts are discussed in the learning areas of Individual and Society, Active Citizenship and Global Connections in the program. While there are 10 learning outcomes in 3 learning areas at the 4th grade level in the 2018 Social Studies Curriculum, 7 learning outcomes in 2 learning areas in the 5th grade, 11 learning outcomes in 2 learning areas in the 6th grade, and 4 learning outcomes in 1 learning area in the 7th grade are related to democracy and human rights. However, it was emphasized that there is a need to increase these gains, especially at the 7th grade level. In addition, it was determined that explanations about the methods and materials for teachers were not presented in sufficient detail to support the learning outcomes (Tural & Şahan, 2021). In the Primary School 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grade Social Studies Curriculum (2024), learning outcomes related to democracy and human rights were mostly collected in the "Our Living Democracy" unit. With only one learning outcome, the issue of respecting individual characteristics was addressed in the "Living Together" unit.

There is a need for more studies examining primary school students' perceptions of human rights concepts in Türkiye. Because it is not possible for children to become effective citizens without understanding their rights and responsibilities in society. Therefore, it is necessary to determine what students know and how they perceive basic human rights at the primary school level. It is seen that studies are mostly conducted at the primary school level to reveal students' perceptions about children's rights. In the study in which Demirezen, Altıkulaç and Akhan (2013) tried to reveal primary school students' perceptions of children's rights, it was observed that students' perceptions of children's rights focused on the freedom of play, entertainment, education, living and expressing their thoughts. In the study of Ersoy (2011), in which he tried to reveal the perceptions of primary school students at different socio-economic levels about children's rights, it was revealed that their perceptions of children's rights and the resources learned and the problems they faced differed according to the socio-economic situation. Akengin (2008) concluded that children are generally unaware of their rights in a comparative study on children's perceptions of children's rights in Turkish society in Türkiye and Turkish society in Northern Cyprus. In the study of Bayrak, Gök, Yörük and Kaya (2020), in which they tried to determine how aware preschool children are of their rights, they determined that children mostly depicted the right to "nutrition" in their drawings in the dimension of vital rights in the context of "children's rights" and the right to "play and rest" in the dimension of development rights. In the study in which Gültekin, Bayır and Balbağ (2016) tried to reveal the perceptions of children at different socio-economic levels about their rights based on their written statements, it was concluded that the socioeconomic levels of children affected their perceptions of children's rights. As seen in these studies, no study has been found to determine the human rights perception of students in primary school.

In studies abroad, it is seen that studies on both children's rights and human rights are carried out with primary school students. These studies focused on children's perceptions of the concept of rights, how children adopt and use these concepts, and the effects of human rights education. For example, in the study conducted by Osler and Starkey (2005) in the UK, it was aimed to understand students' perception of children's rights and the relationship of this perception with the education program. This study was carried out with student and teacher interviews and classroom observations. According to the results of the study, it was determined that students'

perception of human rights is largely shaped by teaching methods and social events, and game-based activities are effective in raising awareness. In the study conducted by Howe and Covell (2007) in Canada, the extent to which children adopt their rights and the effect of rights-based education programs were examined. In this study, two different groups of students with and without rights-based education were compared. As a result, it has been observed that students understand and express their rights better in the classrooms where rights-based education is applied. In the study conducted by Hahn (1998) in the USA, the effect of the relationship between human rights and citizenship education on the awareness level of students was investigated. In this study, students from different socio-economic levels were reached by using questionnaire and focus group interviews methods. The results of the study revealed that students are more aware of individual and social rights in schools where human rights education is provided. The study by Torney-Purta and Barber (2011), conducted in Europe, aimed to examine how children's perceptions of rights in various European countries influence their democratic values. In this study, which adopted a cross-international research model, student surveys and interviews with school administrators were conducted in 15 different countries. According to the results of the study, it was determined that the democratic participation levels and social responsibility feelings of the students who received human rights education were higher. Finally, Bajaj's (2012) study in South Asia evaluated the effects of human rights education at the primary school level. In this study, which used participatory observations and in-depth interviews with teachers, it was determined that human rights-based education raised awareness about the defense of educational rights, especially of girls.

When the studies conducted in Türkiye and abroad are examined in the literature, it is seen that human rights are also included in the curricula and textbooks, although it is seen that more children's rights are studied at this age level. Therefore, during this period, children experience an educational process in which they learn both children's rights and human rights together. As a matter of fact, both support each other and form the basis of democracy. Determining the perceptions of democracy and human rights that students acquire while graduating from primary school is an important issue that needs to be examined as it will form the basis for their later citizenship education. In this study, it was aimed to examine the perceptions of 4th grade students about human rights through their drawings. For this purpose, we sought answers to the following research questions.

1. Which human rights did the students include in their drawings?
2. How did the students experience the human rights they discussed in their drawings?
3. From what sources did the students learn about human rights?

Method

Research Design

This research was designed as qualitative research. With the qualitative research method, students' comments on human rights were tried to be revealed with their own expressions and their experiences were tried to be reached. In this research, an art-based research approach was adopted, which includes the use of art as a method, a form of analysis, and an object. One of

the ways to work in the art-based research approach is children's drawings (Dotson, 2007, cited in Ersoy & Türkkan, 2010). Art-based research (FTA) is an approach that uses the creative processes and products of art as a research method. This method aims to obtain rich information, especially on complex and in-depth topics, using art's forms of expression as both data collection and analysis tools (Leavy, 2015). This form of research goes beyond traditional research methods, integrating art's emotional and aesthetic dimensions into the research process. This approach allows researchers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and emotions (Eisner, 2008). Especially in studies with children, artistic expressions such as drawing are used as an effective tool in revealing children's inner worlds and perceptions (Doston, 2007). For example, Dotson (2007) discussed how children's drawings can be used in FTA. Children's drawings are an important and rich source of data in the research process as individual narratives. These illustrations allow children to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences, and provide researchers with an opportunity to analyze these expressions. In addition, FTA plays a central role in both the research process of art and the presentation of results (Ersoy & Türkkan, 2009). As a result, art-based research is an approach that makes it possible to obtain in-depth and rich data, especially in studies with children, by integrating the creative and expressive power of art into research processes.

Children's creative drawings provide a rich source of data in research as individual narratives. Through drawings, children express the meanings they attribute to their environment. At the same time, children's drawings are an important tool for children to evaluate their knowledge, beliefs and attitudes. In recent years, the drawing method has been used in educational research to examine children's representations of social phenomena, activities, and physical contexts, especially in the school environment (Fabris, Lange-Küttner, Shiakou & Longobardi, 2023). Children's drawings can be used for different purposes in research. First, the drawings are to designate, within its theoretical framework, a classification of the 'emotional signs' that can be found in children's drawings, secondly, the identification of personality traits, mainly interpreted by Freud. Rather than personality assessment or clinical diagnosis, he was thirdly concerned with the ways in which normal children portray personally important or emotionally important issues (Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011). In this study, children's drawings were used to understand children's knowledge and perceptions about human rights and how these perceptions were formed.

Study Group

Typical case sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used to determine the students participating in the study (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). It aims to show typical, ordinary situations, accepted as normal or average in society (Patton, 2005). The research was carried out in the 4th grade of a primary school in the city center of Eskişehir. Since this primary school is a school where middle socio-economic students study and is thought to reflect the average of Türkiye, the research was carried out in this school.

17 students participated in the study. Most of the students have middle and lower socio-economic families. Of the students, 11 were female and 6 were male. 14 of these student drawings were found to be related to human rights and evaluated. Since the drawings of three of the students were not about human rights, they were not taken into consideration. The personal characteristics of the 10 students whose drawings were quoted are given in Table 1.

Table 1

Personal Characteristics of Students

Code name	Mother		Father		Number of siblings
	Training	Occupation	Training	Occupation	
Selin	Bachelor's degree	Officer	Bachelor's degree	Veterinarian	2
Filiz	Secondary School	Employee	High School	Employee	1
Dilara	Primary School	Housewife	Secondary School	Freelancer	3
Merve	High School	Nurse	High School	Freelancer	2
Duygu	Primary School	Housewife	High School	Freelancer	2
Melisa	High School	Freelancer	High School	Freelancer	2
Hakan	Secondary School	Housewife	High School	Employee	2
Doğukan	Associate Degree	Technician	High School	Freelancer	1
Ceren	Secondary School	Housewife	High School	Employee	3
Akın	High School	Employee	High School	Officer	2

Of the 10 students quoted from their drawings, 6 were girls and 4 were boys. Their mothers are at the level of education as secondary school, high school undergraduate and associate degree, and 4 of them are housewives and other mothers work as workers, civil servants and self-employed. Fathers were educated at secondary, high school and undergraduate levels, and 5 of them are self-employed and the others are working as workers, veterinarians and civil servants. Although the number of siblings of the students varies between 1 and 3, they are usually 2 siblings.

Data Collection and Analysis

The research data were collected in March-April of the 2024 academic year. The research data were collected in the Social Studies course. First of all, students were asked to draw about human rights. Then, the students were asked to write down what they wanted to say in the drawings they drew. According to the results of the analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students needed to provide data richness. Permission was obtained from the parents before the interview. The interviews were conducted at school using a voice recorder. During the interview, the students were asked what they wanted to tell in their drawings, where they learned this and what they thought. After the interview, the interview transcripts were shared with the students.

The research data were analyzed descriptively (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). First, the researchers examined the classifications in the literature and first classified the students' drawings according to the classification made in the form of personal rights and duties, social and economic rights and political rights and duties in the 1982 Constitution in Türkiye. Then, an analysis was made by combining the written statements of the students on their drawings and the student interview data. The data were analyzed descriptively on the basis of the research questions. In the writing of the findings, the code names given to the students were used to protect the personal information of the students. Direct quotations were given from the opinions of the students. In the direct quotations, students' words including which human rights they included, how they experienced it and where they learned from were included.

Findings

The research data are presented in three main themes: "Drawings on Personal Rights and Freedoms", "Drawings on Social and Economic Rights" and "Drawings on Political Rights and Duties". Under these headings, the drawings of ten students and quotations from their interviews are included.

Figure 1

Themes and Subthemes
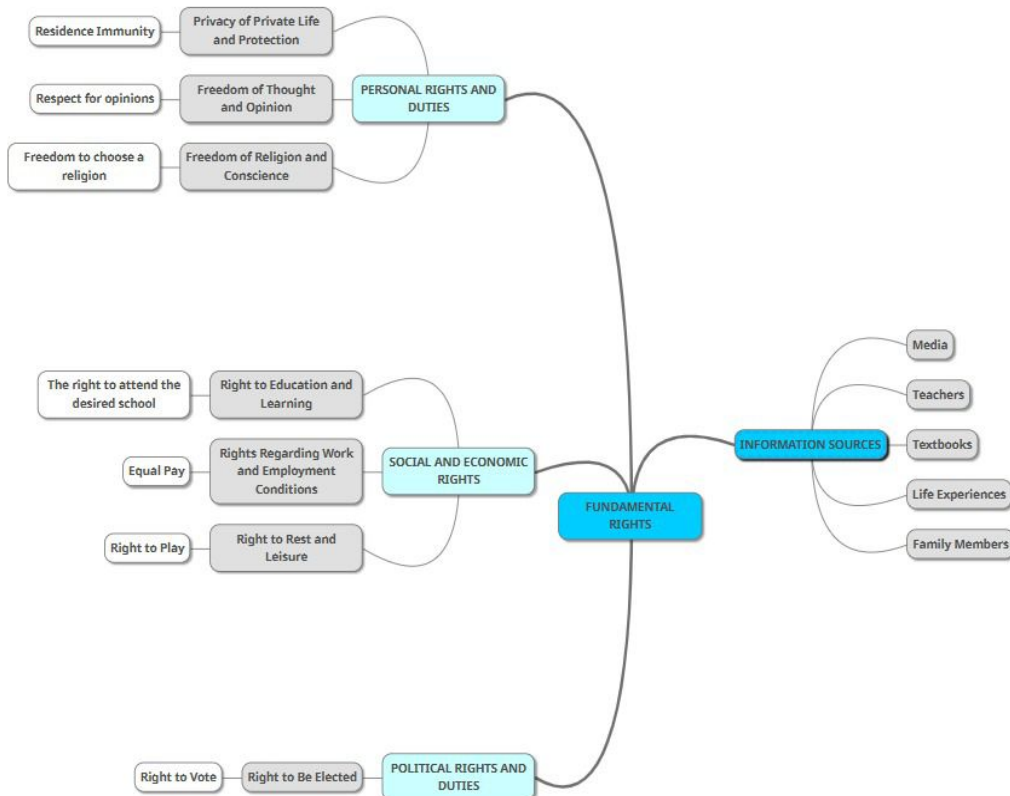
Drawings on Personal Rights and Freedoms

Personal rights and freedoms are associated with the rights that protect the fundamental freedoms of life and private areas of individuals. In their drawings, students discussed the privacy and protection of private life, Freedom of Thought and Opinion, and Freedom of Religion and Conscience concerning personal rights and freedoms. Students noticed the consequences of violating these rights through events in the family, experiences at school, or observations around them. In this context, drawings about personal rights have been associated with this theme based on basic human needs such as the individual feeling safe, expressing his/her thoughts freely and protecting the living space.

Students based more on housing immunity in the privacy of private life. Selin (Drawing 1), while expressing the privacy and protection of private life in her drawing, drew her own house and framed the surroundings of her house with red lines. In her drawing, Selin, who tried to prevent the person who wanted to enter her house with the red line she drew, emphasized the inviolability of the right to privacy and protection of private life. Selin said that she heard about the right to privacy and protection of private life from the Internet and news:

I wanted to tell you not to break into other people's homes. I see people breaking into people's homes on the news and I feel very sad. That's why I wanted to draw this right of ours. In the drawing, I wanted to draw the surroundings of the house in a brighter color because I wanted to indicate that it should be forbidden. I was very upset when a thief broke into my grandmother's house, and my grandmother was in a difficult situation. If we did not have such a right, the thieves would increase and people would not be able to go to work. Their debts would increase.

Drawing 1

Another student who emphasizes the issue of privacy in his drawing is Filiz. In his drawing (Drawing 2), Filiz discussed the inviolability of housing as the privacy of private life. In her drawing, she drew someone who took apples from her gardens without permission. Filiz expressed her thoughts on an incident in which she experienced housing immunity as follows.

A child I didn't know on the street was buying apples without permission, and it came to my mind while drawing. We must not steal anyone's property. If we didn't have this right, everyone could buy something as they wanted.

Drawing 2

Dilara (Drawing 3), in his drawing, stated the Freedom of Thought and Opinion and the right to express himself. Stating that she wanted to draw an event she observed in his life, Dilara wanted to emphasize everyone's right to freedom of thought and opinion in this drawing. Dilara expressed her experience as follows. One day, when she went shopping with her mother, she drew the dialogue between her mother and Dilara after she saw that a mother did not buy her daughter a dress she wanted because it was inappropriate. The girl in the drawing asked her mother, "Mom, can everyone wear the clothes they want?" his mother answered "He can wear it, my daughter".

This is a store. When I went shopping with my mother, her mother told her that they could not buy her daughter the clothes she wanted because they were open. When I asked my mother, she said that everyone could dress the way they wanted. Here, I thought of the rights we had seen. That's why I wanted to draw this right of ours.
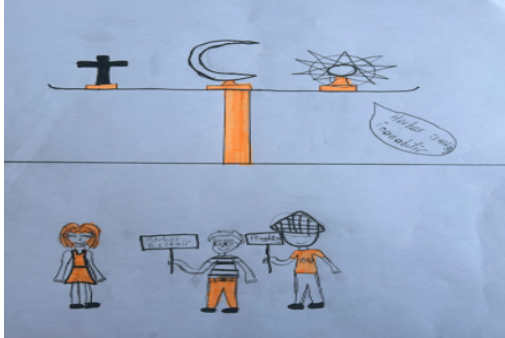
Drawing 3

Merve (Drawing 4) also stated Freedom of Thought and Opinion and the right to express herself in her drawing and emphasized respect for thoughts. In her drawing, Merve deals with a dialogue of people with different thoughts. In the dialogue she stated in her drawing, Merve emphasized that people can think differently and express their thoughts freely by drawing the person who says "Summer is the best season for me", the person who says "Spring is the best for me", and the person who says "I like music". Merve said that she learned the right to freedom of thought and opinion from the textbook Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy

The people I draw in the drawing are happy because the people they talk to respect their opinions. I learned this right from our Human Rights course. "I learned this from our teacher.

Drawing 4

Duygu's drawing (Drawing 5) included freedom of religion and conscience from personal rights and freedoms, and religious symbols at the top of the page. At the bottom of the page, she tried to highlight the differences by drawing a Chinese person holding a sign that said Pingdeng (equality) and a person who said everyone is equal. In the drawing, she tried to emphasize that people who believe in different religions are equal. Thus, she tried to explain that believing in different religions does not disturb the equality between people. He said that he learned the right to freedom of emotion, religion and conscience from his father and from the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy education course she took at the 4th grade level.

I wanted to explain that everyone has equal rights and is free to choose the religion they want to choose. The person with the hat on is Chinese and the other is Turkish, but they have equal rights. I tried to draw the dress of the woman I drew open. In this driwing, I wanted to tell you that we are both free and equal despite our differences. Everyone can think freely and wear whatever outfit they want. Since I care about religion, I wanted to draw it on the top. I learned this right from my father and our human rights course.

Drawing 5

In her drawing (Drawing 6), Melisa emphasized the rights from personal rights and freedoms to Freedom of Thought and Religion and freedom of conscience. Melisa emphasized freedom of religion and conscience and freedom of thought by drawing religious symbols. At the same time, she drew the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the judge, which she saw as the defender of our rights, and emphasized the rights to the protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedom. Melisa said that she learned this right from her teacher.
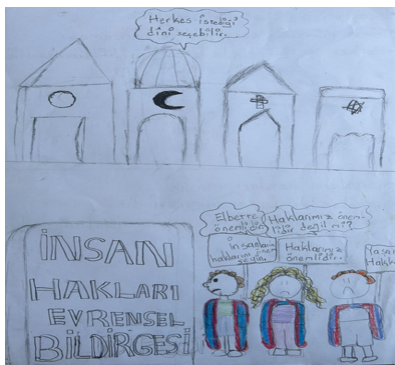
People can choose any religion they want. No one can interfere with the religion chosen by anyone. Everyone can behave as they wish in their chosen religion. I wanted to tell you about two kinds of human rights. I wanted to draw here both about respecting people's rights and about people's religion. The symbols here refer to different religions. I wanted to draw this human right because I attach more importance to these human rights. Because for me, people's religion is more important to me. People here are upset that their rights are not being cared for. The person in the middle is the judge. The robe on her. I drew it because the judges defended our right. Our rights are written in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights book, and judges defend our rights by reading this book. I learned these rights from my teacher and the textbook.

Drawing 6

In this section, students focus on individual rights such as privacy of private life, freedom of thought and opinion, freedom of religion and conscience. In the drawings, issues such as housing immunity, respect for thoughts, tolerance of different religions are discussed. The students emphasized the importance of protecting these rights in terms of personal security, free thought and a sense of equality. Students' drawings are usually based on the events they experience in their own lives, such as their lessons, family communication and experiences, and situations observed from the environment during the education process.

Drawings on Social and Economic Rights

The theme of social and economic rights includes the economic, social and cultural rights necessary for the development of individuals. Regarding social and economic rights in their

drawings, students discussed the right to education, the rights to business life and conditions, and the right to entertainment and rest. The right to attend any school as part of the right to education and training, equal pay for equal work and working conditions, and the right to leisure and rest.

In his drawing (Drawing 7), Hakan describes the right to education and training. In his drawing, Hakan stated that everyone should receive education and while talking about the right to education, he explained that everyone can go to the school they want and express their opinions openly on this issue. There is a school and a child in Hakan's drawing. The child in the drawing says "Everyone can go to the school they want". Hakan explained his drawing as follows:

Everyone can go to the school they want and everyone should be educated. Everyone can get upset if they don't go to the school they want. No one can force me. I want to go to the school I want in secondary school. I'm coming to the school I want right now. I learned about this right from the book and the board opened by our teacher.

Drawing 7

In his drawing (Drawing 8), Doğukan emphasized the right to justice in remuneration (equal remuneration) regarding rights to work life and working conditions. Doğukan explained what he was trying to say in his drawing: "There is a woman and a man. The woman is holding 100 coins and the man is holding 200." In this drawing, Doğukan showed that women were paid less despite doing equal work and included the figure of a lawyer as an advocate of rights. He said that he also experienced inequality, but wanted to draw the wage inequality experienced by women around him. He said that he learned the right to fair earnings from the video his teacher made him watch and the speeches of the women around him.
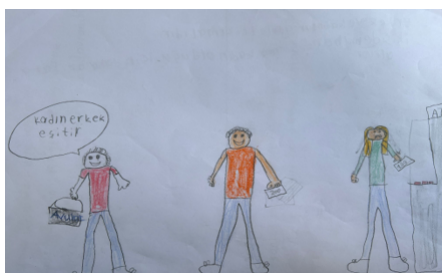
Man and woman are equal. But women get paid less because they are women. The women around me say they get paid less. I also experienced inequalities that I cannot explain, but I wanted to draw the inequality experienced by women. The woman in my drawing is unhappy because she gets less money. I learned about this right from the video my teacher made us watch. I learned from the same video that lawyers also defend our right.

Drawing 8

Ceren wanted to explain her right to play and have fun in her drawing (Drawing 9). She drew children playing a football game. She said that she drew this right by remembering that there was not enough support for her brother to exercise this right in her life at home. Ceren said she learned this right from her teacher and the textbook Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy.

Every child can play any game they want. When I think of human rights, I think of our first game right. If we were deprived of this right, no child would play, and then people would be unhappy. I learned it from my teacher and from our human rights book. I drew this drawing because my brother wanted to prevent me from playing games. While I was drawing this, my brother came to my mind.

Drawing 9

In this section, students included economic rights such as the right to education and training, justice in business life and equal pay, and the right to entertainment and rest. In the drawings, the issues of equal opportunities and fair wages in education attracted attention. For example, one student emphasized the wage inequality between women and men, while another student illustrated the right to play based on personal experiences within the family. In this theme, social injustices and inequalities of opportunity observed in daily life come to the fore.

Drawings Related to Political Rights and Duties

Political rights include citizenship, the right to vote and stand for election, the right to engage in political activity, political party activities, the right to enter public service and the right to petition, obtain information and apply to the ombudsman. Political rights are related to the rights that enable individuals to participate in social and political processes. Regarding political rights and duties, only the right to vote for the election was mentioned. Less emphasis on this theme in drawings and discourses is due to the fact that students encounter fewer political rights in their daily lives. In this context, drawings related to political rights are gathered under this theme in an effort to visualize students' democratic participation, which is an abstract concept.

Many human rights are included in the drawing of the raid. One of them is the right to vote and vote, unlike other students. In the drawing of the raid, he drew a ballot box and two people who voted. He said that he learned these rights from books. Akın said the following about his drawing:

Everyone in the world is equal. Everyone can do what they want, everyone can be free. Everyone can wear what they want, everyone can vote what they want. Anyone can believe in the Islam they believe in. The whole world must abide by these rules.

Drawing 10

Political rights are included in this section, but they are less represented compared to other themes. Only one student mentioned the right to vote. Drawings and discourses show that this

age group is less confronted with political rights in their daily lives. Despite this, the themes of democracy and equal participation are implicitly expressed in the drawings.

Conclusion and Discussion

According to the results of this research conducted to understand the perceptions of human rights through the drawings of primary school 4th grade students, students mostly discussed personal rights such as freedom of religion and conscience, freedom of thought and opinion, privacy of their private life, and then the rights to education and training, business life and working conditions. Only one student mentioned the right to choose among political rights.

When the rights that the students included in their drawings and what the students said about these rights in the interviews are analyzed, it is seen that they mostly expressed the rights they encountered in their lives. Regarding the rights they included in their drawings, the students gave examples from their family members at home, their communication with their teachers during lessons at school, and sometimes from their observations around them. The fact that political rights are the least included in the drawings of the students is due to the fact that they have few encounters and experiences in their lives. Many research findings also show that students, especially at the primary school level, focus more on their personal rights because of the contexts they are most familiar with. Economic and political rights come later (Altıkulaç & Akhan, 2013; Barton, 2020; Bayrak, Gök, Yörük & Kaya, 2020; Ersoy, 2011; Gültekin, Gürdoğan-Bayır & Balbağ, 2016; Oğuz-Hacat & Demir 2017; Rizzini & Thapliyal, 2007).

Another result of the research shows that children's perceptions of rights are affected by the socio-cultural environment they live in. Since the students studying at the school where this research was carried out were at a medium socio-economic level, they did not mention them because they could exercise their basic rights to life, shelter, nutrition, etc. The students who participated in this study mostly talked about the rights arising from the problems they encountered in their lives rather than the rights such as privacy, freedom of thought and opinion and, freedom of religion and conscience, education, working conditions and equal pay. Different research findings support this result of the research. For example, it is seen that students' personal agendas, prior knowledge, motivations and contextual factors are effective in students' understanding of human rights concepts (Wade, 1994). Therefore, many research results are showing that the levels of knowledge, perception and awareness of children's rights differ according to the socio-economic conditions in which students live (Ersoy, 2011; Gültekin, Gürdoğan-Bayır & Balbağ, 2016; Osler, 1998; Rizzini & Thapliyal, 2007; Tereseviciene & Jonyniene, 2001). In addition, it is seen that children with personal limitations who live in poor school and home conditions pay less attention to their rights and are less able to notice their lack (Kosher & Ben-Arieh, 2017; Veiga, 2001). In addition, children with a high level of parental education generally have better socio-economic conditions and a high level of knowledge and awareness of their rights (Hart, Pavlovic, & Zeidner, 2001).

As a result of the research, when the students were asked where they learned the rights they included in their drawings, they stated that they learned from the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy course, social studies course, textbooks, teachers, internet researches, news, family members and daily life experiences they took at the 4th grade level. Although this situation shows that students have obtained information about human rights from many sources,

the statements of the students such as "Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy Course", "the book of this course" and "my teacher" show that the main sources of information on this subject are schools. Few students said they learned from family and media. It can be said that the media sources on the internet are not used much yet due to the age of the students. Some research findings support this research's results (Ersoy, 2011; Taylor, Smith, & Nairn, 2001). First of all, different studies show that education programs play an important role in raising citizens who know the rights of students (Ho, Sim & Alviar-Martin, 2011). There are studies in Türkiyw showing that primary school students learn about human rights from the Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy course and become more sensitive to their rights (Aslan & Aybek, 2018; Çayır & Bağlı, 2011). Oğuz-Hacat & Demir, 2017). However, the teachers who gave this course stated that students had difficulty in understanding human rights issues because they were abstract (Kaçar & Kaçar, 2016). In addition, teachers stated that they did not adopt the issues related to the rights acquired in this lesson when they did not experience them in children's daily family life (Toprak & Demir, 2017). However, some studies show that children cannot learn and use their rights adequately at home and at school (Ersoy, 2012).

The results of this research show that the human rights that students learn at school are more permanent when they experience them, especially when they see them in their environment. For example, the right to vote, which is not included in their lives, is among the human rights students know and remember less. In the context of these results of the research, the following can be done in terms of implementation in human rights education and future research:

- While teaching students human rights and children's rights, their relationships with their daily lives should be established.

- Activities that ensure the unity of family, school and environment can be carried out in human rights education.

- Educational materials on human rights (books, videos, interactive games) can be developed and used to attract students' attention.

- In textbooks, rights can be made to exemplify everyday life experiences.

- Classroom activities that will provide students with an observation and discussion environment can be planned to detect rights violations.

- More comprehensive and in-depth research can be conducted at different grade levels in different socio-economic and cultural contexts that will reveal students' perceptions of human rights.

Ethics Statements

This study was conducted in full compliance with ethical standards, ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality of all participants.

Declarations Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Leading with Cultural Responsive: A Systematic Review of the Literature

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Abstract

Purpose: The lack of meaningful cultural connections between students, teachers, and educational leaders is a significant factor contributing to the academic underperformance of Black/African American and Hispanic student populations. This disconnect exacerbates the academic achievement gap, hindering students' progress and future prospects. A systematic review of the literature will be provided centering on the role of culturally responsive leadership in research-based best practices of effective educational leadership.

Methods: This study presents systematic literature using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). A rigorous search was conducted of the following key concepts: effective educational leadership, effective school leadership practices, leadership for diverse student populations, and culturally responsive leadership. The results were utilized to create a summary of current terminology used to describe the research-based leadership practices. The methodology for a systematic literature review is rigorous and transparent, and it is similar to the standards used in primary research.

Findings: The results indicate that culturally responsive leadership is limited in its contribution to effective educational leadership and effective school leadership practices, as it was mentioned only once each. In contrast, when examining effective leadership for diverse student populations, the concept emerged more frequently, appearing four times.

Implications for Research and Practice: Our findings suggest that culturally responsive leadership should be included in educational research as a foundational skill set for effective school leadership. Its significance extends beyond addressing diversity; it underscores a comprehensive approach to fostering inclusivity and enhancing educational outcomes for all student populations.

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Introduction

For educational leaders in K – 12 settings, the dramatic change in the racial/ethnic and cultural demographics of many school communities across the United States (U.S.) requires a shift in the lens through which effective leadership is viewed. Researchers have previously identified the absence of culturally responsive school leadership practices as a contributing factor to the persistent gap in academic attainment outcomes among Black/African American and Hispanic students and their White/non-Hispanic counterparts (NCES, 2022; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Ladson-Billings 1995). This analysis systematically reviews the research to explore the inclusion of culturally responsive leadership (CRL) in published research-based manuscripts that address effective educational leadership, school leadership practices, and leadership for diverse student populations. This investigation is critical given the persistent disparities in high school graduation rates among varied racial groups in the U.S. (NCES, 2024). Currently, the national high school graduation rate for Black/African American students is 81%, while for Hispanic students, it stands at 83% (NCES, 2024). However, White/non-Hispanic students maintain a national high school graduation rate of 90% (NCES, 2024). The data of the public schools in the country specifies disparities in dropout rates categorized by race: Asian (1.8%), White (4.1%), two or more races (5.1%), Black (5.6%), Hispanic (7.7%), Pacific Islander (8.0%), and Native American (9.6%) (U.S.DOE, 2021). These disparities arise from various factors, including one of the most significant being the lack of cultural connections between students and their educational leaders and teachers (Gay, 2010). A significant number of educational leaders, 77.1%, identify as White/non-Hispanic (NCES, 2022), mirroring the demographic trend among teachers, with 80% identifying as White/non-Hispanic (NCES, 2023). The incongruity becomes apparent when the teacher and leader demographics are juxtaposed with the student body, where ethnic and racial minorities constitute the majority of 55% (NCES, 2022). Khalifa and colleagues (2016) indicate that as the population demographics of the school community shift, school leadership practices must also shift to align with the unique needs of the student populations served. However, a striking dissonance emerges in the racial and ethnic makeup and leadership practices of public school leaders across the U.S. A manner in which to address the disparities is to elevate the development of culturally responsive leaders who have the capacity to cultivate an inclusive school culture, thereby addressing the disparities faced by students of diverse racial/ethnic identities. This qualitative analysis will examine the level of inclusion of cultural responsiveness among published research centering on effective school/educational leadership.

Background

The acknowledgment and value of cultural diversity are pivotal in shaping students' success within the education system, as research indicates that students thrive academically when their cultural identity is integrated into their learning experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1994). However, the prevailing educational norms predominantly cater to the cultural experiences of White, middle-class students (Jack & Black, 2022). The lack of alignment between the school culture and the diverse backgrounds of its students leads to misunderstandings and misinterpretations in their interactions (Ware, 2006). This disconnect often hampers effective communication between teachers and students. Student learning may be enhanced within a nurturing and inclusive environment (Watson, 2001). As the racial/ethnic diversity of the student population continues to increase, school leaders' pivotal responsibility may be viewed as cultivating and

maintaining a positive school climate while ensuring an atmosphere conducive to effective learning through CRL and teaching practices.

Terms such as cultural responsiveness, cultural relevance, and cultural competence have centered the focus of effective school leadership on research-based best practices for the diverse school community population served. Barakat et al. (2019) define a culturally competent leader as one who possesses cultural knowledge, beliefs, motivation, and skills. According to Brooks and Brooks (2019), culturally relevant leadership fosters positive student engagement by emphasizing high expectations and developing organizational policies and structures that empower both students and families, particularly those from diverse backgrounds. Similarly, Khalifa et al. (2016) describe CRL as shaping the school environment and addressing the cultural needs of students, parents, and teachers. These leaders support and develop school staff and cultivate a welcoming, inclusive, and accepting atmosphere for minoritized students. The literature review will explore the four dimensions of CRL: critical self-reflection, community advocacy and engagement, school culture and climate, and instructional and transformational leadership (Campos-Moreira et al., 2020; Khalifa, 2013, 2016; Marshall & Khalifa, 2018).

Literature Review

Culturally Responsive Leadership

Culturally responsive methodologies encompass a resilience-oriented perspective, emphasizing leveraging ecocultural assets to mitigate risks and foster positive outcomes (Perez-Brena et al., 2018). The "responsiveness" in cultural responsiveness encapsulates a comprehensive aspect of the term, signifying the capacity of school leaders to foster educational environments and curricula that effectively address the multifaceted educational, social, political, and cultural needs of students while remaining contextually relevant (Khalifa et al., 2016). This comprehensive analysis will provide insight into the research highlighting culturally responsive school leadership while emphasizing four identified dimensions: critical self-reflection, community advocacy and engagement, school culture and climate, and instructional and transformational leadership (Marshall & Khalifa, 2018; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Sleeter, 2012).

Effective CRL includes critical self-reflection, which allows leaders to identify and comprehend their personal biases and assumptions rooted in their cultural backgrounds (Young & Laible, 2000). This introspection equips them to effectively recognize and address social justice issues within their roles as educational leaders (Furman, 2012), thereby fostering a heightened sense of critical consciousness that, in turn, nurtures equitable educational practices and policies (Brown, 2005). As previously indicated, practices are critical in the education of minoritized student populations, who represent the majority of current public school students in the United States.

The capacity of educational leaders to discern, comprehend, and champion community-based concerns has been extensively discussed in the literature (Khalifa, 2012; Walker, 2009). Historically, Black/African American segregated schools and their symbiotic relationship with communities provided a comprehensive background to this interaction (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Previously, the interplay between families/communities and schools facilitated mutual benefits for both entities, wherein the school harnessed the community's support and expertise. In contrast, the community relied on the school's academic direction and guidance (Siddle-

Walker, 1993). This symbiosis aligns with Epstein's theory of overlapping spheres, which posits that student learning and success are maximized when home, school, and community collaborate to support holistic development (Epstein & Sanders, 2006). By cultivating these partnerships, educational leaders can create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment that recognizes and utilizes community strengths, ultimately enhancing all students' educational experience and achievement.

Moreover, Ladson-Billings (2002) asserts that CRL is pivotal in facilitating teachers' and students' intellectual, social, and emotional growth, creating a positive school culture and climate. This is achieved through the adept use of cultural references to transmit knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Ladson-Billings, 2002). Influential educational leaders in diverse communities also create organizational structures that foster positive teacher-student relationships, promote students' socioemotional growth, and nurture a conducive school culture (Bower et al., 2015; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Leyden & Shale, 2012). Roeser and colleagues (2000) highlight the indispensable role of school leaders in nurturing enduring relationships that facilitate genuine interactions and meaningful bonds between teachers and students. Such interactions are vital in establishing a nurturing and supportive educational environment where all students thrive. Ultimately, the success of CRL lies in its ability to bridge cultural gaps and promote an inclusive and equitable educational experience, empowering students to achieve their full potential.

Transformational and instructional leadership represents integral components of CRL (Khalifa et al., 2016). Transformational school leadership embodies influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. This form of leadership facilitates the development of a shared vision, motivating constituents to work collectively toward the school's objectives (Anderson, 2017). Li (2020) affirms the influential impact of transformational leadership on student outcomes. Instructional leadership, conversely, centers around optimizing teaching and learning processes, encompassing students, teachers, and the curriculum (Kazak & Polat, 2018). The alignment of transformational and shared instructional leadership has significantly influenced school performance, as evidenced by pedagogical quality and student achievement (Marks & Printy, 2003). Together, these leadership approaches create an empowering environment that supports student success, underscores the importance of a collaborative educational culture, and aligns with the principles of CRL.

Gaps in Culturally Responsive Leadership Research

Although CRL is widely acknowledged in research, it is often not prominently featured in the literature unless one actively seeks it out. Khalifa et al. (2016) provided a synthesis of the existing literature on CRL, offering a framework aimed at making the entire school environment more responsive to the educational needs of minoritized students. This analysis aims to conduct a systematic literature review on CRL and critically analyze whether CRL is recognized as an effective approach to educational leadership, a best practice in school leadership, or a suitable model for leading diverse student populations. A systematic literature review on CRL and this analysis has yet to be addressed.

Additionally, there is a significant gap in professional development related to culturally responsive practices. Many educators and school leaders receive minimal to no training in CRL, which hampers their ability to effectively address the needs of diverse student populations

(Scherer, 2016). Research indicates that ongoing professional development focused on cultural competency is crucial for leaders to successfully implement CRL practices (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016).

Purpose and Research Questions

This systematic review examines the descriptors provided in published research-based manuscripts that center on effective educational leadership as a practice and a guiding framework for school leadership tailored to diverse student populations. This systematic literature review addresses the underrepresentation of diverse educational leaders and teachers through a critical examination of how research defines effective leadership for today's diverse public school populations. CRL is presented as a potential pathway to bridge the gap that students of color often experience within public schools. This review seeks to explore whether CRL is considered an effective leadership practice in peer-reviewed manuscripts. In addition, this systematic analysis delves deeply into the educational leadership research landscape, exploring effective practices of leading schools with majority racially/ethnically or culturally diverse student populations. This analysis categorizes the inquiry into four key domains:

- effective educational leadership,
- effective school leadership practices,
- effective leadership for diverse student populations, and
- culturally responsive leadership practices

These domains serve as guiding pillars, directing our examination of scholarly discourse to ascertain the integration of diversity and culture within educational leadership studies. Each domain undergoes independent scrutiny, beginning with the broader concept of effective school leadership and progressively focusing on specific facets, culminating in the nuanced exploration of CRL. This systematic literature review will assess whether CRL is recognized as an effective approach to educational leadership, a best practice in school leadership, or an appropriate leadership model for diverse student populations in educational leadership research.

Research Question

How is CRL perceived in the educational leadership research according to the following:

- its effectiveness as a leadership approach,
- its integration as best practice within educational leadership research
- its inclusion in research-based discussions of effective school leadership in diverse contexts?

Methodology

The present research adhered to the 2020 recommendations of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA), as outlined by Page et al. (2021). The PRISMA method was selected for its ability to enhance the rigor and reproducibility of our research process. It facilitated a comprehensive search, enabling the ability to examine peer-

reviewed research manuscripts to determine the level of inclusion of CRL in discussions centering on effective leadership practices. A comprehensive rationale for any noteworthy restrictions to study eligibility is provided. Following the initial identification of studies and exclusion of book entries, our methodology encompassed a meticulous multistep approach. This includes an initial screening phase to assess relevance and alignment with our predefined guidelines. For clarity, Figure 1 illustrates a visual representation of the studies identified, employing a PRISMA-compliant flow diagram.

Figure 1

PRISMA diagram
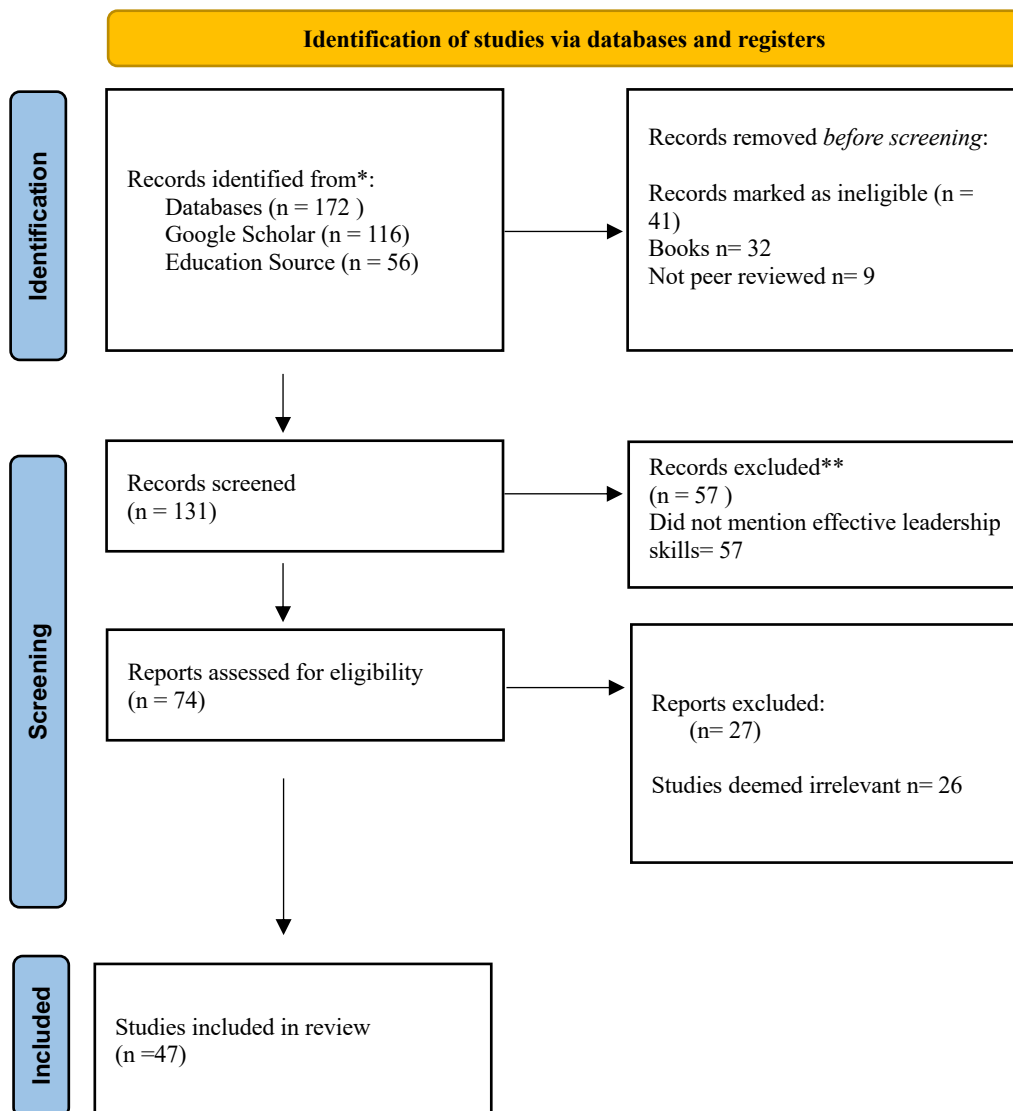
Data Collection

Searches were conducted using Google Scholar and Education Source databases. The search terms were:

- effective educational leadership,
- effective school leadership practices,
- effective leadership for diverse student populations, and
- culturally responsive leadership

The publication year criteria were established as 2004 to 2024, ensuring a comprehensive overview of CRL published research. The database search for records was completed up to April 2024, thus including the most recent available studies. Furthermore, we exclusively included studies that underwent a rigorous peer-review process. Exclusions comprised other types of reports such as unpublished manuscripts, online reports, doctoral dissertations, conference abstracts, and other forms of grey literature. Additionally, to maintain coherence within the diverse landscape of educational settings, only studies focusing on CRL within K–12 settings were incorporated into the review.

Article Screening

Full-text research articles meeting the following criteria were included in the review: a) peer-reviewed, b) published in English, and c) addressed effective educational leadership strategies. Research articles were excluded if they fell into any of the following categories: a) to increase the rigor of the manuscript, peer-reviewed (such as dissertations or theses), b) inaccessible via Google Scholar, subsequent internet searches, or the authors' university library systems; c) published in languages other than English; or d) to increase the rigor of the manuscript, peer-reviewed manuscripts that were outside the scope of the research questions. Research articles were deemed outside the scope of the research question if they did not address strategies to enhance effective educational leadership. The screening process initially began with 172 articles and involved three stages. In the first stage, 32 books and eight non-peer-reviewed articles were excluded. The second stage eliminated research articles that did not cover effective leadership practices. In the third stage, 27 articles deemed irrelevant to the research question were excluded.

Data Analysis

The selected research articles underwent Nvivo analysis following the screening process to identify recurring themes regarding effective educational leadership. These themes, drawn from the conclusions and recommendations sections of the articles, were subsequently organized within each respective table. In the ensuing discussion, we explore the extent to which CRL is included in published manuscripts as an effective leadership practice.

Results

Table 1

Effective Educational Leadership

Citation	Population	Purpose	Methodology	Conclusions/ Recommendations
Santamarfa, et al. (2015)	K-12	The findings from an assessment of the personal and professional development of leaders involved in the Maori Success Initiative	Qualitative	Employ CRL
Blaik et al. (2022)	K-12	The methods and resources transformational leaders use when confronted with challenges related to emotional intelligence	Qualitative	Employ transformational leadership Develop professionally across various emotional and social intelligence domains Facilitate school transformation
Özdemir (2020)	K-12	The key competencies and sub-competencies educational administrators should hold	Qualitative	Oversee educational programs and environments Establish effective communication and work environment
Crippen (2004)	K-12	The concept of servant leadership to Manitoba's educational community	Review of literature	Employ servant leadership
Leahy & Shore (2019)	K-12	The journey of two highly successful, long-serving charter school leaders that transformed underprivileged, struggling schools with at-risk student populations, making a resounding impact on their institutions and significantly boosting student achievement within their communities	Qualitative	Establish and nurture a school to success could be likened more to a visionary undertaking than conventional school leadership
Intxausti, et al. (2016)	K-12	The optimal practices observed in highly effective schools within the Autonomous Region of the Basque Country (Spain)	Qualitative	Employ positive leadership Create a unified and well-defined mission embraced by all staff Develop a favorable attitude toward training and continuous learning Cultivate dedication and enthusiasm among the teaching staff for a collective school vision Support teaching and learning procedures Promote a peaceful and harmonious coexistence and a well-coordinated organization
Fisher (2021)	K-12	The leaders' behaviors should be aligned with the cultures present among staff	Qualitative	Foster collaboration and trust Adjust decision-making frameworks

Table 1 showcases the results of 7 studies delving into *effective educational leadership.* Four overarching themes emerged:

- leadership approaches: noted four times

- professional development and support: noted four times

- organizational practices: noted six times

- mission and vision: noted twice

These results showcase that CRL was not found to be an effective educational leadership approach in the literature. Within this array, the themes centered on leadership approaches,

professional development and support, organizational practices, and mission and vision. Incorporating professional development programs strategically designed to augment the effectiveness of educational leaders emerged as a prominent theme within this inquiry. Fisher (2021) suggests a lack of professional development opportunities for current leaders concerning the skills, tools, and comprehension necessary to lead culturally diverse communities effectively. Furthermore, Santamarfa (2015) advocates for effective, CRL, emphasizing the importance of adapting leadership practices to diverse cultural contexts.

Table 2

Effective School Leadership Practices

Citation	Population	Purpose	Type of Study	Conclusions/ Recommendations
Odhiambo & Hii (2012)	K-12	The perception of effective leadership through the lens of teacher, student, and parent stakeholders	Qualitative	Ensure teaching and learning quality Employ relational leadership
Turan & Bektas (2013)	Primary	The correlation between the leadership practices of school administrators and the prevailing school culture	Quantitative	Create vision Encourage staff
Crum & Sherman (2008)	Secondary	The common themes of school leadership and instructional practices of high school principals at successful schools in Virginia	Qualitative	Foster personnel development and leadership Delegate effectively Empower team members Acknowledge ultimate responsibility Foster communication and rapport Facilitate instruction Navigate change
Crum et al. (2010)	Primary	The theories of action embraced and internalized by school principals, enabling them to function as effective leaders within the challenging landscape of accountability	Qualitative	Lead with data Have integrity and relationships Nurture ownership and collaboration Identify and nurture leadership qualities Engage in instructional awareness
Salfi (2011)	K-12	The effective leadership practices among secondary-level head teachers in Pakistan that contribute to school improvement	Mixed-methods	Share a common vision Cultivate a culture of collaboration, support, and trust Engage various stakeholders in decision-making Foster strong relationships among school personnel Prioritize teacher and self-development Involve parents and the community in advancing school improvement efforts
Naicker, et al. (2013)	K-12	The instructional leadership practices of school principals within high-performing schools situated in challenging environments	Qualitative	Employ instructional leadership Enhance feedback quality to ensure superior outcomes
Ghavifekr, et al. (2020)	Secondary	The determinants impacting principals' behaviors within private schools	Qualitative	Establish shared visions, missions, and goals Arrange professional development initiatives Foster an innovative, collaborative, and team-oriented culture Oversee an active and forward-thinking teaching and learning environment
Bouchamma (2012)	K-12	The leadership practices within successful schools situated in economically disadvantaged areas across three Canadian provinces: Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick	Qualitative	Set objectives and expectations Allocate resources strategically Plan, coordinate, and assess the curriculum Encourage and engage in teacher supervision and development

Shriberg, et al. (2010)	K-12	The key attributes and behaviors of effective leaders in the field	Qualitative	Maintain order and provide support Exhibit competence, expertise, and upstanding interpersonal skills, along with genuine personal character
Huff et al. (2018)	Secondary	The Practices that set apart leaders' approaches in highly effective high schools catering to significant numbers of at-risk youth from those in less effective high schools	Qualitative	Monitor feedback to enhance the quality of teaching Align the curriculum Establish support systems for students Implement systematic measures to promote personalized learning for students
De Nobile, et al. (2016)	Primary	The aspects of leadership practices that are likely to encourage well-executed whole-school behavior management	Qualitative	Implement a whole-school behavior model
Intxausti, et al. (2016)	K-12	The optimal practices observed in highly effective schools within the Autonomous Region of the Basque Country (Spain)	Qualitative	Implement positive leadership Create a unified and well-defined mission embraced by all professionals, Implement a favorable attitude toward training and continuous learning Cultivate dedication and enthusiasm among the teaching staff for a collective school vision Support for teaching and learning procedures Focus on promoting peaceful and harmonious coexistence and well-coordinated organization
Hayes & Derrington (2023)	K-12	The effective leadership strategies adopted by school principals when managing a crisis within a school setting.	Qualitative	Demonstrate high emotional intelligence, collaborative skills, concern for others, and attentiveness to the specific context of the school community
Ghamrawi (2023)	K-12	The policy review of school leadership in the State of Qatar	Qualitative	Create school autonomy
Du Plessis (2017)	K-12	The challenges and complexities in rural leaders' work and how they navigate the position	Qualitative	Implement instructional leadership Acquire a rural lens
Leithwood (2021)	K-12	The school leadership practices are likely to facilitate equitable school conditions and outcomes for diverse and traditionally underserved students	Review of research	Participate in ongoing professional training Build productive partnerships among parents, schools, and the larger community, as well as encourage teachers to engage in forms of instruction with all students that are both ambitious and culturally responsive
Mombourquette (2017)	K-12	The degree to which personal and school-based vision are used to impact the student learning experience	Qualitative	Create a vision for the school

Table 2 presents findings from 17 studies exploring *effective school leadership practices*. The studies unveiled six predominant themes:

- leadership development, noted four times

- vision and mission, noted four times

- communication, noted one time

- support for teaching and learning, noted four times

- community engagement, noted twice

- CRL, noted once

- data-driven decision-making, noted once

These results showcase that CRL is not seen as a best practice within educational leadership research, as it was only notated once.

Table 2 presents the outcomes of 17 studies delving into *effective school leadership practices*. These studies revealed three overarching themes: teaching and learning quality, school culture, and instructional leadership. The seamless integration of teaching and learning quality with school culture is evident in the research findings of Ghavifekr and Ramzy (2020). Their study underscores the pivotal role played by effective school principals in enhancing teachers' academic excellence through strategic leadership practices. These practices encompass guiding shared vision planning, organizing professional development, fostering innovation and collaboration, and overseeing the teaching environment. This emphasizes the influential role principals have in fostering the success of teachers.

Furthermore, Intxausti and colleagues (2016) emphasize the integral connection between school culture and leadership. They highlight the importance of school leaders in cultivating dedication and enthusiasm among teaching staff, nurturing a collective school vision, providing support for teaching and learning procedures, promoting peaceful coexistence, and ensuring a well-coordinated organization. Together, these insights underscore the intricate interplay between leadership practices and school culture, emphasizing their collective impact on educational excellence.

In aligning with these perspectives, Naicker and colleagues (2013) shed light on the imperative for a comprehensive reevaluation of instructional leadership practices. Their argument centers on the necessity of shaping the school's structures and cultures in direct response to the unique realities within the environment of the school community.

Table 3

Effective School Leadership for Diverse Student Populations

Citation	Population	Purpose	Type of Study	Conclusions / Recommendations
Szeto et al. (2019)	K-12	The experiences of two principals in China as they navigate diverse leadership approaches to address these challenges amidst substantial education reform	Qualitative	Center on inclusivity Incorporate innovative and adaptable interventions to ensure equitable student learning Support development from all facets of the school community: the school's sponsoring body, the teaching team, and parents
Furney et al. (2005)	K-12	The capacity of schools to support students with diverse needs in general education classrooms	Qualitative	Foster shared vision Create collaborative processes Use data to make decisions about curriculum and instruction Understand and utilize policy to create comprehensive school systems
Andersen & Ottesen (2011)	K-12	The investigation into how school leaders address inclusion challenges in two Norwegian upper secondary schools	Qualitative	Create platforms for collective learning and exchanging experiences regarding teaching students from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds are needed
Leithwood (2021)	K-12	The school leadership practices and attitudes that are probable contributors	Review of research	Forge effective partnerships between parents, schools, and the broader community

		to enhancing equitable school conditions and outcomes for diverse and traditionally marginalized students		Encourage teachers to employ ambitious and culturally responsive instructional approaches with all students Adopt a critical view of schools' policies, practices, and procedures while cultivating a deep understanding of the cultures, norms, values, and expectations of their students' families
Haar & Robicheau (2007)	K-12	The initial findings from two surveys focused on the following areas: The ethnic and gender composition of Minnesota school leaders The professional development requirements of school leaders concerning cultural diversity and English Language Learners	Qualitative	Eradicate stereotypes Enhance training related to the diverse learning needs of all students Emphasize students' backgrounds as assets for enriching learning Comprehend family dynamics and their impact on addressing the achievement gap Implement a curriculum and instructional approach suitable for a diverse school Support for teachers in fostering a supportive learning setting
Madhlangobe & Gordon (2012)	K-12	The strategies used by a culturally responsive school leader to foster equity within a racially and linguistically diverse school	Qualitative	Employ CRL across three dimensions: personal, environmental, and curricular Demonstrate care Establish relationships Display persistence and persuasion Be actively present and communicative Set an example in cultural responsiveness Promote cultural responsiveness, among other aspects
Jacobson & Johnson (2011)	K-12	The elements of successful school leadership	Review of literature	Employ CRL
Khalifa, et al. (2016)	K-12	The framework for literature focused on developing a school environment responsive to the needs of minoritized students	Synthesis of literature	Employ CRL
Minkos, et al. (2017)	K-12	The practical suggestions regarding culturally responsive strategies and practices that school administrators might employ in leading diverse school communities	Conceptual paper	Employ CRL
Crum et al. (2010)	K-12	The actions that help principals serve as successful leaders in the tumultuous accountability climate	Qualitative	Lead with data Create an honest environment and cultivate relationships Foster ownership and collaboration Recognize and develop leadership Employ instructional awareness and involvement
Szeto & Cheng (2017)	K-12	The exploration of principals' leadership journeys in response to social justice issues arising from specific contextual changes during times of uncertainty	Quantitative	Plan and implement innovative and flexible interventions to ensure equality in students' learning development
Villavicenci (2016)	K-12	The investigation into the methods used by school leaders to establish and sustain student diversity in charter schools	Qualitative	Formulate curriculum-focused missions Execute targeted student recruitment Adopt a broader interpretation of state charter enrollment guidelines to enhance inclusivity
Liou et al. (2017)	Secondary	The prevailing high-stakes accountability initiatives have inadvertently resulted in many school leaders perpetuating an environment fostering deficit perspectives and maintaining low academic expectations in classrooms	Qualitative	Understand the importance of student perspectives Reevaluate low classroom expectations Identify significant barriers to achieving schoolwide excellence in our nation
Young (2015)	K-12	The UCEA Developing Leaders to Support Diverse Learners (LSDL)	Qualitative	Foster school improvement Ensure quality teaching

		curriculum modules for educational leadership preparation		Develop and sustain a positive learning-centered environment Maximize opportunities to learn and to engage stakeholders in student success
Huguet (2017)	K-12	The examination of existing literature on the impact of effective leadership on school performance, providing a foundation for schools to pursue similar outcomes in comparable educational settings	Critical review of literature	Foster collaboration Empower teacher leadership Hire educators deeply passionate about teaching and dedicated to children

Table 3 summarizes findings from 15 studies exploring effective school leadership practices for diverse populations. These studies unveiled six recurring themes:

1. inclusivity and equity, noted four times

2. collaborations and partnerships, noted three times

3. CRL- noted four times

4. data-driven decision-making, noted three times

5. leadership development, noted three times

6. continuous improvement, noted four times

7. create shared vision, noted once

8. community, noted two times

These results showcase that CRL was included in research on effective school leadership in diverse contexts, as it was notated four times. Szeto et al (2019) emphasize the significance of school leaders providing essential support for leadership strategies aligned with the principals' value systems. This approach allows the exploration of alternative methods for evaluating student learning, participation, and development and underscores the importance of involving the community, teachers, and parents in this process.

Leithwood (2021) asserts that equity-oriented school leaders can have a profound impact by establishing genuine partnerships among schools, families, and communities to ensure student success. These partnerships not only improve home conditions, benefiting student success in school, such as raising parent expectations, but also have the potential to engage hesitant parents in collaborative decision-making about how the school can better contribute to their children's success.

Additionally, training teachers can positively influence students. Madhlangobe and Gordon (2012) propose that cultural responsiveness can serve as a framework to shape how teachers are trained to address the diverse needs of the contemporary classroom, regardless of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Table 4

Culturally Responsive School Leadership

Citation	Population	Purpose	Type of Study	Conclusions/Recommendations
Madhlangobe& Gordon (2012)	K-12	The description of how a culturally sensitive school leader advocated for fairness in a racially and linguistically diverse school	Qualitative	Employ culturally sensitive leadership across three domains: personal, environmental, and curricular Employ compassion, relationship-building, perseverance, effective communication and

				presence, modeling cultural sensitivity, and nurturing cultural awareness among others
Johnson (2007)	Primary	The research on culturally responsive teaching and African American female principals in urban schools	Qualitative	Establish inclusive and empowering connections with diverse parents and community members
Genao (2021)	K-12	The analysis of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading (CRTL) among aspiring school leaders and how the implementation contributes to the social justice experienced by marginalized students, families, and communities	Qualitative	Emphasize cultural responsiveness as an intrinsic quality Acknowledge self-identity Learn from diverse community perspectives Embrace inclusive celebrations Challenge practice through disruption
Johnson (2006)	K-12	The concept of CRL	Qualitative	Develop skills of a public intellectual, curriculum innovator, and social activist Employ social justice leadership Scrutinize the context of historical, political, and social circumstances where it is applied
Khalifa, et al. (2016)	K-12	The framework for the literature that seeks to make the school environment responsive	Synthesis of literature	Employ CRL
Lopez (2015)	K-12	The leadership practices of six school leaders within a major school board in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario, Canada.	Qualitative	Be insightful, introspective, intentional, and bold
Brown, et al (2022)	K-12	The elements and participants that may impede or aid the development of these practices across four European countries: Austria, Ireland, Russia, and Spain	Qualitative	Comprehend students' lived experiences, from their initial reception to their integration and inclusion within a school setting or otherwise
Cager & Garibaldi (2022)	K-12	The leveraging of CRL to enhance learning opportunities for African American students through the federally mandated support of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021	Qualitative	Incorporate data walls for planning Invite stakeholders to serve on committees that develop vision, mission, core values, strategic goals and plans, and other foundational documents Incorporate stakeholders' voices into the foundational structure and guiding principles of the organization which will promote buy-in, transparency, and trust to mitigate the disenfranchisement that African American families often feel when it comes to their children's education
Leithwood (2021)	K-12	The school leadership practices likely to help improve equitable school conditions and outcomes for diverse and traditionally underserved students	Review of research	Build productive partnerships among parents, schools, and the larger community
Vassallo (2015)	K-12	The case for an innovative and dynamic model for CRL	Conceptual paper	Employ effective and transformational leadership Encourage teachers to engage in forms of instruction with all students that are both ambitious and culturally responsive
Taliaferro (2011)	K-12	The exploration of social capital and CRL theories as a means to understand and bridge differences that arise in diverse educational settings for public school leaders	Conceptual paper	Employ social capital and CRL
Khalifa (2013)	K-12	The CRL practices for students with Hip-Hop identity performatives	Qualitative	Take a lead role in promoting an inclusive space
Minkos, et al. (2017)	K-12	The practical suggestions regarding culturally responsive strategies and practices that school administrators might employ in leading diverse school communities	Conceptual paper	Employ CRL

Mayfield & Garrison-Wade (2015)	Intermediate	The culturally responsive practices schoolwide in a middle school that is successfully closing academic opportunity gaps between White and Black students	Qualitative	Foster ongoing dialogue on race by actively involving teachers in professional development sessions Build the cultural competency of staff

Table 4 summarizes the results of 15 studies investigating culturally responsive school leadership. The identified themes encompass various aspects:

1. CRL - noted six times

2. communication - noted three times

3. cultural responsiveness and awareness - noted six times

4. community - noted three times

5. leadership and advocacy - noted three times

6. data-driven decision-making - noted once

7. shared vision - noted once

8. professional development - noted once

The results reveal that CRL encompasses multiple themes, but these themes only became evident when the search term "culturally responsive leadership" was used. Genao (2021) found that prospective administrators emphasize the importance of personal and professional skills for creating effective educational experiences, particularly in the context of diversity. Understanding the broader school community is crucial for determining what to teach, how to learn, and how to lead. Acknowledging the impact of cultural relevance on curricula led to a sense of empowerment through embracing community voices. Utilizing personal perspectives on cultural understanding played a crucial role in initial discussions about redefining cultural relevance, contributing to the pursuit of equitable education.

Data Analysis

To comprehend the fundamental principles of effective educational leadership, we undertook a systematic literature review consisting of the following key terms:

effective educational leadership, effective school leadership practices, effective school leadership practices for diverse populations, and *culturally responsive school leadership.*

The intention was to discern the variations among these distinct search terms to provide insight into the correlation between diversity and culture. The selected peer-reviewed articles were imported into NVivo for qualitative analysis. The software was used to systematically code the data, allowing for the identification and categorization of common themes across the articles. This process facilitated a deeper analysis of recurring patterns and insights, ensuring a comprehensive examination of the selected literature. Through this exploration, the key thematic elements that emerged from the four searches included CRL, vision, professional development, community, communication, and data-driven decision-making. The results revealed key themes indicating that CRL was notably absent from the literature. However, the findings do offer valuable insights into what is broadly considered effective educational

leadership and school leadership practices. Table 5 provides the total frequency of each theme identified during the search for each term.

Table 5

The Total Frequency of Each Theme

Theme	Table	Times mentioned
Culturally Responsive Leadership	1	1
	2	1
	3	4
	4	11
Vision and Mission	1	2
	2	4
	3	1
	4	1
Professional Development	1	2
	2	4
	3	3
	4	1
Community	1	0
	2	2
	3	2
	4	4
Communication	1	1
	2	1
	3	0
	4	2
Data- driven Decision- making	1	0
	2	1
	3	2
	4	1

Culturally Responsive Leadership

CRL was referenced a total of eleven times in the literature review. Notably, six instances were found under the search term *CRL*, while four were identified within the search results for *effective school leadership practices for diverse populations*. Consequently, it is noteworthy that both *effective educational leadership and effective school leadership practices* yielded only one published manuscript centered on CRL. Three manuscripts were qualitative (Santamarfa et al., 2015; Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012; Genao, 2021); three were reviews of the literature (Leithwood, 2021; Jacobson & Johnson, 2011; Khalifa et al., 2016), and two were conceptual papers (Minkos et al., 2017; Taliaferro, 2011). Each of the twelve manuscripts focused explicitly on educational contexts within the United States. In essence, the systematic review identified twelve references to CRL, primarily within the domains of effective educational leadership and practices for diverse populations and CRL, underscoring the limited research on this crucial topic despite its significant relevance in shaping the educational landscape of the United States.

Vision and Mission

Eight manuscripts addressed the role of vision and mission as an effective educational leader. Six manuscripts were qualitative (Intxausti et al., 2016; Leahy & Shore, 2019; Ghavifekr et al., 2020; Furney et al., 2005; Cager & Garibaldi, 2022; Mombourquette, 2017); one was quantitative (Turan & Bektas, 2013), and one was mixed methods (Salfi, 2011). Four manuscripts addressed public schools in the United States (Mombourquette, 2017; Turan & Bektas, 2013; Furney et al., 2005; Cager & Garibaldi, 2022). One manuscript addressed charter schools in the United States (Leahy & Shore, 2019). One addressed private schools in the United States (Ghavifekr et al., 2020), one addressed schools in Spain (Intxausti et al., 2016), and one addressed schools in Pakistan (Salfi, 2011). A recurring theme observed throughout each study was the critical importance of a shared vision and mission within the school as a fundamental component of effective leadership.

Professional Development

Seven manuscripts addressed the role of professional development as an effective educational leader. Six manuscripts were qualitative (Blaik et al., 2022; Crum & Sherman, 2008; Ghavifekr et al., 2020; Haar & Robicheau, 2007; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Szeto et al., 2019), and one was quantitative (Szeto & Cheng, 2017). Four addressed public schools in the United States (Blaik et al., 2022; Crum & Sherman, 2008; Haar & Robicheau, 2007; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015), one addressed private schools in the United States (Ghavifekr et al., 2020), and two addressed China (Szeto et al., 2019; Szeto & Cheng, 2017). A dominant theme embedded within each manuscript highlighted the critical importance of continuous professional development for school leaders and the cultivation of their staff.

Community

Five manuscripts addressed the role of the community as an effective educational leader. Three articles were qualitative (Hayes & Derrington, 2023; Szeto et al., 2019; Genao, 2021), one was a review of research (Leithwood, 2021), and one was mixed-methods (Salfi, 2011). Four addressed public schools in the United States (Hayes & Derrington, 2019; Genao, 2021; Leithwood, 2021), one addressed Pakistan (Salfi, 2011), and one addressed China (Szeto et al, 2019). A recurring theme across these papers was the importance of inclusivity, particularly in engaging the community and parents while establishing meaningful partnerships.

Communication

Four manuscripts, each representing qualitative inquiries conducted within the educational landscape of the United States (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012; Crum & Sherman, 2008; Özdemir, 2020), collectively emphasized the paramount importance of communication skills for educational leaders. These studies corroborate the fundamental role of effective communication in leadership and accentuate its multifaceted impact on fostering positive relationships, facilitating collaboration, and driving organizational success within educational contexts.

Data-Driven Decision-Making

Three qualitative studies conducted in the United States (Crum et al., 2010; Furney et al., 2005; Cager & Garibaldi, 2022) converged on the critical role of data-driven decision-making within effective leadership within educational settings. These studies underscored the imperative to utilize data for informed decision-making concerning curriculum, instruction, and strategic planning, advocating for practices such as data walls to facilitate comprehensive analysis and strategic planning processes.

Discussion

The comprehensive exploration covering effective educational leadership, effective school leadership practices, and effective school leadership practices for diverse populations revealed a limited presence of CRL in the literature. CRL was scarcely mentioned in discussions of effective educational leadership and school leadership practices, but it was more prominently featured in effective school leadership practices for diverse student populations. Ylimaki and Jacobson (2013) conducted a case study examining principals to compare organizational leadership, instructional leadership, and culturally responsive practices. Their findings revealed that culturally responsive practice leadership development often remains separate from organizational and instructional leadership. The authors assert that given shifting demographics, future leadership preparation programs must explicitly integrate CRL, recognizing that culturally sensitive leadership complements, rather than conflicts with, effective organizational leadership and instructional leadership (2013). This perspective aligns with the findings of this study, which highlight the lack of CRL practices in both the literature and principal viewpoints. The study suggests that this gap results from the insufficient focus on CRL in professional development and educational programs for leaders.

Furthermore, Brown et al. (2021) completed an international review of literature relating to how CRL is conceptualized and defined. Brown et al. (2021) argue that effective school leadership and CRL share essential characteristics. However, CRL goes further by requiring leaders to empathize with marginalized groups and address inequities (Brown et al., 2021). CRL must ensure that every voice is heard, incorporate diverse cultural values, and support teachers in responding to the needs of students from various backgrounds (Brown et al., 2021). Although Brown et al. (2021) recognizes CRL as essential for effective educational leadership, it remains notably absent from much of the existing literature on effective leadership practices in education. CRL received limited attention in the search for effective educational leadership, as it was mentioned only once in Santamarfa (2015). Although aspects related to CRL, such as emotional and social intelligence and transformational leadership, are touched upon by Blaik and colleagues (2022), a comprehensive exploration of CRL remains notably absent from the literature. Thus, CRL remains underrepresented in the literature, as Khalifa (2020) argues in Culturally Responsive School Leadership. He explains that CRL struggles to thrive due to systemic barriers, including the dominance of traditional leadership models that neglect cultural responsiveness, insufficient professional development on CRL, and institutional resistance to change. Khalifa (2020) also points out that many leaders lack the training and awareness needed to address the needs of marginalized communities, preventing CRL from being fully integrated into schools. Without deliberate efforts to promote and institutionalize CRL, Khalifa (2020)

warns, schools will continue to perpetuate inequities, hindering the widespread adoption of this leadership approach.

Exploring effective school leadership practices underscores the pivotal role of instructional leadership, including responsibilities such as promoting quality instruction and fostering a positive school culture. While aspects of CRL were not explicitly mentioned, elements of the term were evident in the literature. Huff et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of established routines and practices, prioritizing faculty development and personalized learning connections, which are aspects of CRL. CRL focus on professionally developing teachers to be culturally responsive and to advocate for a curriculum that promotes personalized learning connections. Odhiambo and Hill (2012) highlighted the principal's multifaceted responsibilities as an instructional leader, from teacher evaluations to fostering a forward-thinking vision. This aligns with CRL, as culturally responsive leaders adopt an instructional leadership standpoint. Furthermore, Intxausti and colleagues (2016) emphasized the vital connection between school culture and leadership. CRL maintains that fostering a positive school culture is essential. CRL received limited attention, with Klar and Brewer's (2013) study being a rare mention. The authors highlighted the importance of cultural responsiveness and adaptability in navigating complex challenges and leading effective school-wide reform efforts. Thus, while many aspects of CRL were implicit in this search, they were only explicitly mentioned once.

Exploring effective school leadership practices for diverse populations has revealed manuscripts advocating equitable education, emphasizing various aspects of CRL. Liou and colleagues (2017) underscore the importance of educators maintaining high expectations for all students, aligning with CRL principles. Andersen and Ottesen (2011) propose integrating culturally familiar content into educational materials for enhanced engagement. Additionally, Leithwood (2021) and Madhlangobe & Gordon (2012) outline essential aspects of cultural responsiveness for educational leaders, emphasizing valuing parents' perspectives and facilitating professional development. Leithwood (2021) highlights that equity-oriented school leaders foster partnerships among schools, families, and communities to ensure student success. Moreover, as Madhlangobe and Gordon (2012) proposed, training teachers in cultural responsiveness contributes to addressing diverse student needs. Overall, these research articles show evidence of a close alignment with CRL principles.

The investigation into culturally responsive school leadership also unveiled research vividly illustrating the qualities and practices inherent in a culturally responsive leader. Genao (2021) underscores the importance of cultural responsiveness thriving in social justice environments, where the leader's identity, rather than just their actions, plays a pivotal role. This involves an emphasis on the awareness that social identity is integral, extending understanding beyond the school premises to learn about the broader school community while celebrating diversity and encouraging classroom conversations that foster the emergence of new ideas on culture, race, and space. These elements significantly contribute to enriching the inclusive practices of teachers and leaders. Fostering this foundation, Johnson (2006) delineates the multifaceted roles of a culturally responsive school leader, encompassing responsibilities as a public intellectual, curriculum innovator, and social activist.

The investigation into effective school leadership practices for diverse populations and culturally responsive school leadership revealed the fundamental principles of CRL, community engagement, and the promotion of equitable education. These findings underscored

the crucial role of CRL as an essential practice. Community involvement and data-driven decision-making are critical aspects of CRL. Engaging with the community and parents and utilizing data are essential for effectively supporting diverse student populations. However, as shown in Table 5 community engagement and data-driven decision-making were not mentioned in discussions of effective educational leadership. This highlights the notable absence of CRL in the effective educational leadership literature.

Recommendations

Development of Intrapersonal Skills

In the professional environment of public schools, the focus on the intrapersonal skills of educational leaders, along with interpersonal skill development, is foundational for authentically engaging with students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. "Interpersonal and intrapersonal processes interrelate: that is, responding to culturally diverse populations will be influenced by intrapersonal processes, such as one's own biases" (Sakata, 2024, p.244).

Authentic cultural responsiveness embodies intrapersonal awareness, which involves understanding one's own personal worldview (Jones, 2009; Sakata, 2024), self-awareness, and recognizing and managing emotions. Leaders are able to transform their frames of reference through critical reflection on their personal assumptions that serve as the foundation of interpretations, beliefs, and habits of mind and critical self-reflection (Mezirow, 1997). Critical self-reflective skills are vital in the process of fostering cultural responsiveness (Saadatmand et al., 2019) as they involve empathy, problem-solving, and respectful communication (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2012). Additionally, intrapersonal skills entail recognizing and managing feelings while engaging in critical self-reflection (Giraldo-García et al., 2023). By engaging in critical self-reflection while consciously employing cultural awareness, educational leaders may address systemic issues while creating nurturing environments, particularly for diverse student populations (Gay & Kirkland, 2003).

Critical cultural self-reflection is a term that focuses on fostering respect, embracing cultural insights, and challenging personal biases (Ball et al., 2010), which are integral factors when interacting with individuals from diverse cultures. Intrapersonal skills complement interpersonal skills during these interactions by enabling culturally responsive leaders to recognize and consciously appreciate differences. Campos-Moreira et al. (2020) proposed a CRL framework that emphasizes the value of accentuating cultural differences during interactions with diverse populations. As such, CRL allows leaders to leverage their understanding of diverse cultural populations through acknowledging and appreciating differences (Rice-Boothe, 2022).

Essentially, CRL transforms educational institutions into inclusive spaces that honor diverse identities (Bonanno et al., 2023). Proficiency in cultural responsiveness may enhance the authenticity of leadership, paving the way for transformative change internally and externally within the school community. This necessitates that school leaders continuously engage in critical self-reflection while seeking to comprehend the societal dynamics within educational systems to ensure student equity (Furman, 2012). Thus, nurturing intrapersonal skills is pivotal

for leadership authenticity as they strive to foster a positive and inclusive educational environment where each student is acknowledged, valued, and supported.

Establishment of an Inclusive School Climate and Culture

By embracing cultural differences, the school leader may create a more cohesive school community where all are acknowledged and appreciated for their uniqueness. Thus, establishing an inclusive school environment that prioritizes and practices empathy involves cultivating culturally responsive school staff (Grayson, 2017). The school's climate is a critical facet of educational institutions, encompassing various domains such as teaching and learning quality, intra-school relationships, organizational structures, and broader institutional and structural features of the school environment. Inclusive school climates have been shown to enhance student achievement, diminish disruptive behaviors, and lower dropout rates (Wang & Degol, 2015). When distinguishing the significance of an inclusive school climate, the National School Climate Council (2007) outlined five fundamental principles to cultivate such an environment (*see Figure 2*). The principles encompass the following: 1) the assurance of social, emotional, and physical security, engagement, and respect for all members; 2) collaborative efforts among students, families, and educators towards shared objectives; 3) the fostering attitudes that underscore the value and gratification of learning; and 4) the active involvement of all stakeholders in the functioning of the school (2007).

Cultural responsive leadership embodies the concept of a sustainable and positive school climate by supporting teachers' development as culturally responsive practitioners (Khalifa, 2018; Khalifa et al., 2016), utilizing cultural knowledge and experiences to deliver effective instruction to all students (Gay, 2000; Minkos et al., 2017; Jones & Nichols, 2013), fostering inclusivity (Khalifa & Delpit, 2018; Riehl, 2000; Khalifa et al., 2016; Magno & Schiff, 2010), and strengthening the dedication to social equity and justice in education (Lopez, 2015). Culturally responsive leaders perform a vital role in cultivating a positive school environment by fostering the integration of culturally relevant pedagogy within classrooms and using cultural references to create meaningful learning experiences and increase student engagement.

Figure 2

Inclusive school climate

National School Climate Council (2007)

The school climate and culture establish the guiding principles and shared vision that steers the expectations of all engaged within the school community (Hall & Hord, 2015). This level of school climate and culture is omnipresent, extending its influence across each facet of the whole school community. It represents a critical role in the attitudes and behaviors of students, staff, faculty, and leaders. Corbett's (1999) (*see Figure 3*) delineation of the four fundamental principles underpinning an inclusive school culture is a roadmap for fostering a prosperous and inclusive environment. These principles, such as actively listening to perspectives beyond personal experiences, advocating for diverse intelligences, ensuring equitable opportunities, and emphasizing the prioritization of core values, lay the foundation for a vibrant and cohesive school community. Culturally responsive leaders support inclusive school communities by leveraging diversity positively to enhance school culture and enrich the educational experience of all students (Magno & Schiff, 2010). Such leaders also foster an environment where educators are empowered to champion these principles (Khalifa et al., 2016; Khalifa & Delpit, 2018) by cultivating a culture of inclusivity, understanding, and respect among all educational community members through guidance and mentorship. The school's climate and culture should intricately weave a fabric of foundational norms, values, and beliefs while shaping the collective mindset, behaviors, and connections among individuals within the school community.

Conclusion

This research underscores the necessity of CRL in public school landscapes, particularly in institutions where a substantial portion of the student body represents culturally, racially, and/or ethnically diverse communities. The absence of authentic cultural connections among students,

teachers, and educational leaders has emerged as a significant barrier and may contribute to the academic underperformance of diverse student populations (Ladson-Billings, 1995). This disconnect perpetuates an alarming academic achievement gap and widens the opportunity gap, severely impeding students' educational progress and prospects.

The study unequivocally unearthed the limited research centering on effective leadership practices in culturally, racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse public school communities that entail CRL practices that may address the pervasive racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities related to student achievement. The urgency of the topic lies within educational institutions, including public schools and leadership preparation programs, to prioritize educating school leaders with the knowledge, skills, and administrative abilities to bridge the academic attainment gaps while ensuring a culturally responsive school environment and classroom culture. This necessitates a shift in focus on the view of effective school leaders that centers on high student standardized test scores to a perspective that aligns with research-based best practices that foster cultural awareness, sensitivity, and inclusivity while ensuring the outcome of student academic achievement and cultural affirmation. The integration of culturally responsive educational leadership into leadership preparation programs and practicing leader professional development opportunities has the potential to achieve this goal.

Additionally, ongoing efforts to diversify the teaching and administrative staff may contribute significantly to creating a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. By fostering genuine cultural understanding and connections, school leaders may create nurturing school cultures where all students, regardless of race/ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, or primary language, have equitable opportunities to excel academically and realize their full potential.

Limitations

The limitations of this research centered on the published manuscripts that addressed the topic of concern. Thus, manuscripts were eliminated if they did not meet the following criteria: 1) written in English, 2) research-oriented, and 3) sourced from academic databases such as Google Scholar and Education Source.

Declarations

Ethics Statements

This systematic literature review adheres to the highest ethical standards as indicated in the methodology section.

Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest to report.

Informed Consent

This qualitative study did not require informed consent. All research included has been duly cited within the manuscript.

Data availability

The present study adhered to the 2020 recommendations of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA), as outlined by Page et al. (2021).

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