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### Investigating Emerging Bilingual Learner Related Field Experiences in School Psychology Graduate Training

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Investigating Emerging Bilingual Learner Related Field Experiences in School  
Psychology Graduate Training

Austin Rogers, M.S.

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctorate in School Psychology.

Minnesota State University, Mankato

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Psychology Graduate Training

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## ABSTRACT

There is limited research regarding school psychology field and practicum experiences that are devoted to developing skills related to emergent bilingual learners (EBL). This study attempted to better understand what types of EBL-related field and practicum experiences are most influential in preparing school psychologists to feel confident in their ability to provide school psychological services to EBL students. One hundred thirty-five practicing school psychologists were surveyed using a questionnaire focused on the types of EBL-related field and practicum experiences commonly found in exemplary multiculturally-focused school psychology graduate programs and practitioners' perceptions of their ability to provide a number of services to EBL students. Results of this study suggest that structured EBL-related field and practicum experiences are most influential in school psychologists' perceptions of preparedness and confidence providing services to EBL students. Additional factors were investigated (e.g., exposure to EBL students in practicum) and were also found to be influential.

## Introduction

Students who are not yet proficient in English make up an increasingly large portion of the students enrolled in U.S. schools. By 2030, these students will comprise an estimated 40% of the American student population (Maxwell & Shah, 2012), whereas they currently comprise approximately 10% of students in schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2015, as cited in Pew Research Center, 2018). Between 1990 and 2010, the number of White students decreased and the number of Hispanic and Asian students increased (Lopez & Bursztyn, 2013). Approximately 78% of these students spoke a language other than English at home. Thus, it is critical that school psychologists are prepared to address the unique needs of students who not yet proficient in English, as it is likely they will interact with them at some point in their careers.

Traditionally, a variety of terms (e.g., English language learner (ELL), limited English proficient (LEP), dual language learner (DLL), multilingual learner (MLL, etc.) have been used to define the population of students who are not yet proficient in English. This reported lack of proficiency in English can be due to a number of reasons such as being exposed to a language other than English in the home prior to being enrolled in school, living in a country where English is not commonly spoken, etc. It is often difficult to find a term that appropriately identify these students who have varied experiences with developing proficiency in English. While English language learner (ELL) has been considered most inclusive (e.g., acknowledging the fact that all these students are learning English in school) it devalues other languages and puts the English language in a sole position of legitimacy (Garcia et al., 2008). Additionally, the term ELL focuses

primarily on these students' lack of English language proficiency. The term EBL more appropriately places the student on a continuum of bilingualism and removes the categorization of the student as either limited English proficient or English proficient (Garcia, 2009). Bilingualism not only indicates ways to better teach these students (e.g., scaffolding through their first language) but also denotes strengths that the student receives by becoming bilingual. For these reasons, the term EBL will be used to define this population within the bounds of this study.

Training programs have an important role in preparing future school psychologists with the skills needed to support EBLs. Unfortunately, it is unclear if current graduate training programs adequately prepare future school psychologists to work effectively with EBLs. The effectiveness of the pre-service training is ultimately based on the fulfillment of program requirements. In order to be accredited by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), training programs must meet the *NASP Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* (2020). NASP acknowledges that effective training programs require “qualified faculty, substantial coursework, and supervised field experiences” (p. 15). The specific standards addressed by NASP are school psychology program context/structure, domains of school psychology graduate education and practice, practica and internships in school psychology, and school psychology program support/resources. NASP’s Domains of School Psychology Graduate Education and Practice explain the range of skills and knowledge that school psychologists need to have to best meet the needs of the students, families, and communities they serve. Domain 8 focuses on ensuring that students learn

how to support students of diverse backgrounds and needs. This domain specifically includes addressing the needs of EBL students. Additionally, language concerning issues of diversity is included throughout the *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* (2020). However, while these issues are commonly addressed, it is unknown how much time training programs actually dedicate to multicultural and EBL-related issues (Aldridge, 2013). Multicultural training is important for adequately supporting this group of students, as EBLs come from a variety of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Second language acquisition is also central to EBLs' ability to succeed in school and needs to be understood when evaluating the needs of these students (Ortiz et al., 2011). While school psychologists tend to receive some training concerning EBLs, it is often focused on areas such as assessment. Preparation must be comprehensive to better represent the breadth of school psychologists' professional competencies.

### **The Specific Needs of EBL Students**

EBLs are likely to come from a variety of backgrounds that will present very different and unique needs that school psychologists must be prepared to address. These needs include but are not limited to learning English, navigating a new culture, and coping with stress related to immigration and low socioeconomic status (SES). Apart from having to learn English and how to navigate a new culture, many EBLs are immigrants. As of the 2016-2017 school year, roughly 23% of the identified EBLs were also immigrants/noncitizens (Pew Research Center, 2018). Depending on the immigrant



family's circumstances, these students may face challenges due to discrimination and other systemic injustices (Rogers-Sirin et al., 2014).

In addition, EBLs are likely to come from families of low SES. On average, 60% of EBLs are from low-income families (Grantmakers for Education, 2013). There is a growing body of research indicating the effects of poverty on neurobiological development as well. This research has indicated significant developmental differences based on SES (Blair & Raver, 2016). Students that experience poverty-related adversity experience a multitude of related chronic stressors (e.g., hunger, high mobility, limited health care, etc.).

Finally, EBLs will also experience challenges related to low English proficiency (LEP). For example, it can often be a challenge for EBL students to understand instruction to the extent of their monolingual peers. These challenges extend beyond the walls of the school into the daily lives of these students. It is common for these students to function as default translators for parents and family members who speak little to no English. These are just a few of the examples how LEP status itself can affect the student.

The myriad of negative effects related to potential immigration status, low SES, LEP status, and navigating a new culture present a complex array of needs that can be difficult to prepare for with limited training. Thus, graduate training programs need to provide efficient ways to prepare future school psychologists concerning EBL-related issues.

### **EBL-Related Issues in School Psychology Research**

EBLs face challenges that often appear similar to those of their monolingual peers (e.g., academic and social-emotional difficulties, interventions). For example, it is often difficult for educators to differentiate between academic problems that are an artifact of limited English proficiency and those that are actually associated with disabilities (Ortiz et al., 2011). Thus, these issues require their own dedicated research and training. According to Albers et al. (2009), only 6.5% of manuscripts published in school psychology journals address EBL-related issues. These studies were categorized into assessment, consultation, intervention, and any other relevant topics. Furthermore, more than half of these studies focused on assessment and eligibility, despite the rapidly expanding role of practitioners who serve EBLs. Despite an emphasis on assessment, current EBL specific research has grown in other areas like consultation and intervention. For example, Villareal (2014) investigated the inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse participants in intervention research. It was noted that roughly 15% of sampled articles include information concerning EBL status of participants. While this may appear representative of EBL populations, it was suggested that the low reporting percentages may call into question the validity of the research results, as approximately 85% of studies did not report any information concerning the EBL status of participants. Most recently, Schanding and colleagues (2021) investigated the inclusion of typically underrepresented students in four primary school psychology journals from 2010 to 2019. While this study cited the research done by Albers et al. (2009) and acknowledged the need for updated research relating to EBL representation in school psychology research,

it failed to include EBL students within their investigation. Updated research relating to EBL representation in school psychology research is needed.

Beyond representation in the literature, the current research only addresses a few of the ways school psychologists can provide appropriate services to EBL students. NASP acknowledges the multitude of issues EBLs face within the U.S. educational system and released a position statement that identified multiple areas where school psychologists are responsible for providing equitable and culturally responsive services. These services include assessment, consultation, systematic intervention and advocacy, prevention and intervention, and family-school collaboration (NASP, 2015). It is understood that school psychologists should play active roles within each of these areas. However, due to the lack of research in these areas, it is common for school psychologists to feel underprepared to address the unique needs of students who are EBLs. Beyond limited research, it has been found that practicing school psychologists often express that they did not receive sufficient training to address many of the responsibilities concerning EBL-related issues as laid out by NASP's position paper in 2015. For example, Ochoa et al. (1997) reported nearly 70% of respondents indicated that their training was inadequate concerning second-language acquisition and conducting and interpreting assessment for EBLs. Many of these inadequacies were attributed to the lack of training in EBL-related issues as well as the limitations of the then-current assessments. In 2020, Pollard-Durodoula and Miller surveyed school psychology student interns regarding their perceptions of their graduate training to support EBL students. Program limitations were apparent in the themes that appeared in the interns' responses.

One theme in particular was the lack of diverse and comprehensive field training experiences. This included concerns of having to rely on native-language interpreters who lacked assessment training.

Practicum experiences are the mechanism for the acquisition of applied skills in school psychology and should be relevant to current issues in school psychology (NASP, 2008). As previously noted, NASP acknowledges that school psychologists need to know how to support students of diverse backgrounds and needs within Domain 8 of their Domains of Practice. Thus, field and practicum experiences should include experiences devoted to students of diverse backgrounds and needs. However, issues related to language, in particular EBL students, can easily be overlooked due to the wide range of diverse backgrounds and needs of students. Schanding and colleagues (2021) note that we must ensure that the school psychology literature is representative of the diverse student populations served by school psychologists so that school psychologists can enact social justice through culturally responsive professional practices. As noted, there are a variety of terms that can be used to define students whose first language is not English such as EBL. These terms vary and can be used to define unique populations even within the broader scope of students whose first language is not English. Additionally, EBL students are also often referred to under broader terms such as culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD). This term accounts for intersectionality in students who not only experience multiple languages in their day-to-day life but also participate in cultures other than what can be considered mainstream culture. The non-inclusion of linguistic diversity within Schanding et al. (2021) is a potential example of how this

intersectionality of culture and language may draw more focus on cultural diversity in school psychology research. While not always the case, cultural diversity in school psychology research is often addressed through the investigation of the race or ethnicity of students, teachers, practitioners, etc. However, race and ethnicity often cannot get at the nuances of an individual's cultural identity and experiences. Similarly, research regarding EBL students struggles to find terms and methods that properly address the varied linguistic experiences of students whose first language is not English. However, another potential factor is the existence of research and fields specifically devoted to the learning of a second language (e.g., TESOL, TEFL, ESL, etc.). It is likely that substantial knowledge in both the realms of school psychology and second language acquisition are needed to help bridge the gap between the research bases. While efforts are being made efforts are being made to bridge this gap specific areas have yet to be addressed such as the practicum experiences of school psychology graduate students related to EBL students.

### **Graduate Student Preparation in EBL-Related Issues**

Although it appears that mainstream school psychology programs provide limited preparation concerning EBLs, other research suggests that effective approaches to addressing EBL-related issues in school psychology coursework and training are possible. This research investigates the characteristics of exemplary multicultural training in school psychology programs. Rogers (2006) employed the help of various experts in racial-ethnic minority issues in school psychology to identify the characteristics of exemplary multicultural training in school psychology programs. They reported that

students in these exemplary programs were often exposed to clients of diverse backgrounds (e.g., racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity) during applied fieldwork. In addition, these programs prepared their students by offering a number of courses devoted specifically to issues of diversity, incorporating multicultural themes into core courses, and providing specialized training concerning specific minority group populations. For example, ensuring that students work on a face-to-face basis with ethnically and culturally diverse clientele and supervisors during fieldwork. While this research also supports the use of in-person experiences with clients of diverse backgrounds during applied fieldwork, it is unknown how common these experiences are in school psychology graduate training programs. NASP allows graduate programs to self-identify as programs that address multicultural issues in their training, without review of how these issues are addressed (NASP, 2010). Li and Fiorello (2011) note that there is a wide variation in practicum training for working with CLD students, ranging from placement in sites with CLD children to placement at a multicultural site with a bilingual school psychologist supervisor. However, it is not known how programs that do not self-identify as multiculturally focused programs address multicultural issues, especially through field and practicum experiences.

Current research in school psychology graduate training demonstrates how important training is in preparing school psychologists to provide services to EBL students. Aldridge (2013) examined the training practices of NASP accredited graduate programs in school psychology concerning best practices when working with EBL students. Both training directors of school psychology programs and school psychology

interns were surveyed. Program directors received questionnaires regarding various aspects of the training they provided their graduate students on the topic of EBLs (e.g., number of course hours, breadth of topics, etc.). School psychology interns received questionnaires concerning both their current knowledge regarding best practices when serving EBLs and how prepared they felt to serve EBLs. Seventy-two percent of intern respondents noted that their programs only minimally prepared or somewhat prepared them to serve EBLs. Faculty reported time to be the largest barrier to providing sufficient training and instruction about EBLs. It was also noted that other state requirements and national standards often take priority over EBL-related topics. However, 81% of interns did indicate receiving multiple courses concerning EBL-related issues. Ultimately, it was concluded that interns were lacking in knowledge concerning EBL-related issues. This is an important finding as interns will have completed their coursework and will have even fewer opportunities for EBL-related training. While this study focused primarily on how knowledge and coursework prepare school psychologists to address EBL-related issues, limited coursework in this area is not the only barrier to educators feeling prepared to provide services to EBLs.

In 2006, Tarquin and Truscott surveyed school psychology students to investigate their perceptions of their field and practicum experiences. They looked specifically at the types of activities in which they engaged during field and practicum experiences and their perceptions of their school-based supervisors' activities. Similar to findings in the field of EBL-related school psychology training, students were found to spend the majority of their practicum time in assessment-related activities. While students often felt satisfied

with their field and practicum experiences, students reported knowing little about the range of their supervisor's activities outside of the activities they had completed as students (e.g., assessment) (Tarquin & Truscott, 2006). These findings suggest that field and practicum experiences are instrumental in shaping graduate students' eventual practice as school psychologists.

In the related field of school counseling, research has demonstrated the importance of experiential learning concerning EBL-related issues. Johnson et al. (2016) assessed the experiential learning of school counselors by measuring aspects of self-efficacy, namely; knowledge, skills, and beliefs relevant to working with EBLs. One of the factors found to be related to higher confidence working with EBL students was being in a school with a large EBL population. Thus, suggesting that these counselors had more exposure to linguistically diverse students and opportunities for culturally responsive interactions. Race and U.S. region were also implicated in increased interactions with EBLs. Similar to the emerging research in the field of school psychology, school counselors who completed more EBL-related training (i.e., personal development) reported higher self-efficacy in interacting with EBLs than counselors who had not pursued training (Johnson et al., 2016). Related training was identified as language courses, English as a second language courses, experiences abroad, and involvement in workshops and conferences. While knowledge plays an important part in increasing self-efficacy, skills and beliefs about the ability to complete the task are also important. In addition, Johnson et al. (2016) found that school counselors who had gained relevant knowledge in conjunction with meaningful experiences had higher levels of self-efficacy



than counselors who had gained relevant knowledge alone. These experiences were described as in vivo or real-life experiences and exposure to cross-cultural interactions, such as with linguistically diverse students. Thus, meaningful experiences were also influential in feeling prepared to provide services to EBLs.

These findings support the importance of both high-quality multicultural training and high-quality multicultural experiences, specifically with EBLs. Johnson et al. (2016) suggested that school counselor training programs may need to consider offering additional coursework or experiential learning opportunities that provide experiences with EBLs. It is common for school psychology graduate training programs to include experiential learning as part of their requirements. It is hypothesized that graduate students could benefit from similar high-quality multicultural experiences, specifically with EBLs. However, currently little is known about efforts to include such experiences in school psychology graduate training. Thus, further research is needed. Due to a lack of research and training, it is difficult for students in school psychology graduate programs to obtain the needed coursework and experiential learning opportunities needed to feel adequately prepared to work with EBLs.

Rogers and colleagues (2021) conducted a study to investigate whether graduate students are having these EBL-related field and practicum learning experiences and how accessible these experiences are to graduate students. The purpose of this study was to better understand how experiences during graduate training contribute to school psychology graduate students' beliefs about pursuing and participating in EBL-related issues. In this study, questions related to the pursuit of and participation in practica and

field placements with EBL-related issues were explored. One hundred thirty-two school psychology graduate students responded to a questionnaire regarding their comfort pursuing and participating in these experiences and how prepared they felt to provide services to EBL students. The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from a survey used by Aldridge (2013). Aldridge's questionnaires were directed toward current interns and program directors. These questionnaires addressed feelings of preparedness to serve EBLs as well as knowledge concerning EBL-related issues. Aldridge's questionnaires were intended to provide understanding of how graduate training influenced knowledge concerning EBL-related issues and feelings of preparedness to serve EBLs.

The adapted questionnaire used by Rogers and colleagues (2021) was directed toward current school psychology graduate students. The first section included nine questions that asked demographic information (e.g., race, type of degree pursued, state/regional information). The second section included seven questions concerning whether their graduate programs required, offered, or allowed the pursuit of or participation in field experiences with EBL-related issues. This section also included questions concerning whether students actually had field experiences with EBL-related issues and how comfortable students would feel pursuing and participating in field experiences with EBL-related issues. Finally, respondents were asked to identify how well they felt their current program was preparing them to provide services to EBLs. Questions that asked about comfortability and graduate school preparation were coded on a 1-5 Likert scale. Two models were analyzed to answer the following research questions; 1) How does offering field/practicum experiences related to EBL issues

influence how prepared students feel to address those issues? and 2) How does offering field/practicum experiences related to EBL issues influence how comfortable students feel in participating in those experiences?

Results from the first model suggested that the offering of EBL-related experiences was influential in students' perceived preparedness to serve EBLs in the future. Offering these experiences accounted for approximately 17% of the variation in perceived preparedness. Thus, the opportunity to participate in EBL specific field experiences did play a role in participants' confidence in providing services to EBLs. Another goal of this study was to better understand whether requiring EBL-related practica and field placements led to school psychology graduate students feeling more comfortable pursuing and participating in EBL-related practicum and field experiences. Within the second model, graduate students who indicated that their program required EBL specific experiences were more likely to feel comfortable participating in those same experiences, although this model accounted for 9% of the variation in students' comfort level and the model was no longer significant once the number of languages spoken was included in the model.

Results of this study suggest that graduate students may feel more prepared to provide services to EBLs when they are given the opportunity to have practicum and field experiences specific to EBL-related issues. However, there were a number of limitations that made it unclear what factors actually make these experiences effective. For example, the study's sample was relatively small and was unable to obtain a representative sample

of regions or training programs. Thus, generalization of the results to training programs in general could not be recommended.

Additionally, some concepts used in this questionnaire may not have been well defined (e.g., the difference between requiring, offering, and allowing field/practicum experiences dedicated to EBL-related issues). Each concept was only addressed once in the questionnaire and responses include yes, no, or unsure. Respondents were not given the opportunity to explain their responses. This may have limited the ability to accurately interpret results related to these questions. Another limitation was that no inclusion criteria were provided concerning what qualified as an EBL-related practicum/field experience. It was up to the respondents to determine what they considered as having previous field/practicum experiences concerning EBL-related issues.

Because this study was unable to identify any specific aspects of these experiences as being important in preparing graduate students concerning EBL-related issues, it is unclear what actually makes these experiences effective. In addition, inclusion criteria for what should be considered EBL-related practicum and field experiences were vague. Therefore, it is difficult to know what types of experiences the respondents had had. Future research should be conducted using inclusion criteria for said experiences. For example, incorporating current best practices concerning EBL-related practicum and field experiences.

### **Current Practices in Multicultural Focused School Psychology Programs**

In order to identify current practices regarding EBL-related practicum and field experiences, a number of self-identified multiculturally focused school psychology

graduate programs were examined. According to the NASP website, there are 23 self-identified, multicultural focused school psychology programs. Each of these programs are committed to issues of diversity in school psychology through the recruitment and retention of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, multicultural curricular emphasis, faculty members involved in multicultural research and outreach, and participation in related research and training grants. These programs may serve as good examples of how to define and incorporate EBL-related field/practicum experiences in training programs. Each of these programs offers practicum and field placements in schools that have a large ratio of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Thus, increasing the opportunities that these students will have to work with EBL students. Each of these programs was examined in terms of a number of common characteristics across these programs. These characteristics included training toward bilingual certification, offering of immersion type field/practicum experiences, and field/practicum placements with high population of culturally linguistically diverse/bilingual students.

While each of these programs has a multicultural focus, not all offer or require EBL-specific experiences. More specifically, ten of these self-identified programs offer a bilingual track or specialization that are typically certified through the state. These programs include additional coursework and field experience requirements in addition to the general school psychology graduate track. Five of the bilingual programs offer immersion practicum experiences in non-English speaking environments (i.e., other countries, ASL schools, dual immersion schools, etc.). However, these immersion experiences are not required nor are they unique to bilingual tracks as two of the general

programs offer immersion experiences as well. A common difference between the bilingual programs and the general multicultural focused school psychology programs is the requirement of practicum and field experiences with EBL students. Bilingual programs require their students to complete bilingual practicum and field experiences often related to specialized assessment (i.e., bilingual assessment), bilingual counseling, and, in some cases, a bilingual internship. However, a variety of similar experiences are also available in the more general school psychology programs (i.e., elective immersion practicum placements, individualized practicum goals concerning EBL-related issues, etc.). After reviewing these 23 multicultural focused programs, it appears that EBL-specific field experiences are often only required as part of a track toward bilingual certification.

It is often believed that the most appropriate way to provide services to linguistically diverse students is through a bilingual school psychologist (BSP). Although these bilingual programs are often employing best practices, they also face barriers related to training experiences (Vega et al., 2019). These include limitations in relevant coursework and faculty experienced in working with EBL populations. Research has also indicated that it is often assumed that a BSP can provide services to EBLs solely on the basis that they speak a second language. However, this is not the case. These psychologists acknowledge this and report feeling uncomfortable providing services that they have not been formally trained in. Similarly, it is recommended that BSPs have trainers, both faculty and field-based supervisors, with competencies in serving EBL students and families as well as completing culturally relevant curriculum (Vega et al.,

2019). However, these BSPs found that training experiences that went beyond the classroom (e.g., practicum, field experiences) with bilingual supervisors and EBL populations were most valuable to their training. Harris and colleagues (2020) noted that quality field experiences are critical to the training of BSP students. Without the supervision of these experiences by a qualified bilingual supervisor, it is difficult for BSP students to gain the formal practice they need to feel prepared to provide these services to EBLs in their future practice. Additionally, if these students are not supervised by a qualified supervisor, it can be difficult for them to provide quality training in the future. Ultimately, experiences with EBL populations supervised by qualified bilingual supervisors cannot always guarantee that BSP students fully develop their bilingual skills. Although bilingual school psychology training programs face their own barriers, Stathatos and colleagues (2020) posit that training programs in general can increase cultural competence in their students through participation in service-learning projects, immersion, and study abroad experiences. Indeed, while not available in the information provided on NASP's website, it is suspected that similar experiences (i.e., elective immersion practicum placements, individualized practicum goals concerning EBL-related issues, etc.) are available through other graduate programs. The research has shown that there are opportunities for school psychology graduate students to have field/practicum experiences with EBL students whether in mainstream graduate training or as part of bilingual/multicultural specific training. However, it remains unknown what types of experiences are most effective in helping school psychologists to feel prepared and comfortable providing services to EBL students.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the current study was twofold. First, the study attempted to extend the Rogers et al. (2021) study that investigated how experiences during graduate training contribute to school psychology graduate students' comfortability pursuing and participating in EBL-related issues and feeling prepared to address those issues. The study investigated a spectrum of EBL-related field/practicum experiences and how they influence school psychologists' preparedness to provide services to EBL students.

Second, this study addressed some of the previously mentioned limitations found in Rogers et al. (2021). For example, graduate students vary greatly in terms of degree completion and, subsequently, opportunities to complete field and practicum experiences. Therefore, the current study surveyed practicing school psychologists regarding EBL-related field/practicum experiences they had during their graduate training. Practicing school psychologists should all have completed a similar amount of field and practicum experiences during their graduate training.

In addition, the investigation of the 23 self-identified multiculturally-focused school psychology programs was used to inform inclusion criteria for what should be considered as EBL-related field/practicum experiences. This investigation found that many of these programs include a bilingual track or specialization. Thus, it is likely that many of the EBL-related field/practicum experiences are found within these tracks and specialty degrees. The investigation of these 23 programs was used to inform the primary research question of the study being: What types of EBL-related field/practicum experiences influence how prepared school psychologists feel to address those issues? A



secondary research question of this study was: What types of EBL-related field/practicum experiences influence how confident school psychologists feel providing services to EBL students? Additional factors were investigated regarding their influence on school psychologists feeling prepared and confident to provide services to EBL students. These factors included the number of EBL-related field/practicum experiences participants had during their training and number of languages that participants speak.

### **Hypotheses**

Practicum experiences have always been considered to be a critical part of school psychology graduate training (Li & Fiorello, 2011). Additionally, structured and guided practicum experiences are the initial mechanism through which school psychologists acquire applied skills they will use throughout their careers (NASP, 2008). The types of field and practicum experiences students receive during graduate training are instrumental in shaping their eventual school psychology practices (Tarquin & Truscott, 2006). Thus, field and practicum experiences need to be relevant and effective in preparing graduate students. The theoretical framework used in this study is that graduate students' field and practicum experiences shape their future practice (Tarquin & Truscott, 2006) and that meaningful experiences during practicum, especially experiences with and related to EBL students are attributed to higher self-efficacy interacting with EBL students (Johnson et al., 2016). Thus, it was hypothesized that experiences that are more structured, such as experiences that are often required as part of bilingual/multicultural specific training, would be most influential in helping school psychologists feel that their program prepared them to address EBL-related issues. In addition, it was hypothesized

that these experiences would be influential in helping school psychologists to feel confident providing services to EBLs. Lastly, it was also hypothesized that exposure to working with EBL students will also influence school psychologists' confidence providing services to EBLs. This includes both having numerous field/practicum experiences with EBLs and having experiences that allow for increased exposure to EBL students such as immersion type experiences.

## **Methods**

### **Measure**

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from the survey used by Rogers and colleagues (2021). The updated questionnaire addressed several limitations found in Rogers et al. (2021) and was directed to practicing school psychologists as opposed to school psychology graduate students. The questionnaire was made up of five sections and had a total of 48 questions. Wording was revised so the survey targets practitioners who have completed the required practicum/field experiences and have had opportunities to provide services to EBL students. For example, the section regarding how comfortable students would feel pursuing and participating in field/practicum experiences with EBL-related issues and how well they felt their current program was preparing them to provide services to EBLs were adapted to address how confident practitioners feel providing services to EBL students and how they felt their training program prepared them to address EBL-related issues. This section was also adapted in conjunction with information gathered regarding current practices in multicultural focused school psychology programs with the intention of better understanding what types of EBL-

related practicum/field experiences are most influential in practitioners feeling confident and prepared to provide services to EBLs.

Questions of these experiences being required/offered/allowed played only a minor role within the previous questionnaire. This was partially due to the lack of description of EBL-related practicum/field experiences. Therefore, changes were made to provide clearer definitions of what qualifies as an EBL-related experience. This included questions such as “Did you complete any field/practicum experiences in schools serving a high number of CLD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) students?”, “Did you complete any field/practicum experiences during which you worked face-to-face with EBL students?”, “Did you complete any field/practicum experiences that included specific goals regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.)?”, etc. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

### **Procedures**

Approval to conduct this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Upon approval, school psychologists were contacted through the established recruitment methods. Emails were sent and included an overview of the study and the link to the online questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed and distributed using Qualtrics. Qualtrics is a web-based survey tool that can be used to build and send questionnaires from any online location. Respondents were also able to complete the Qualtrics questionnaire on an internet enabled device such a computer or smartphone. It was anticipated that the questionnaire would take 10-15 minutes to complete. Follow up emails and posts were sent to thank

those who had already completed the questionnaire and to encourage participation from those who had not yet completed the questionnaire.

The R programming language (i.e., R studio; RStudio Team, 2020) was used to run various statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, correlations, factor analysis, and regressions. In addition to R's base package, both the tidyverse (Wickham et al., 2019) and plyr (Wickham et al., 2019) packages were used for data cleaning.

### **Participants**

Participants were recruited through three methods. The first was through the NASP Research Committee. The Research Committee forwarded the questionnaire to a stratified, random sample of 1,000 NASP members that were identified as being practicing school psychologists. The expected response rate was around 10%. However, the current survey received approximately a 3% response rate. Thus, other methods were implemented to provide sufficient responses for analysis. The second method utilized publicly available emails of program directors of school psychology graduate programs. An email was sent to each program director requesting that they forward the survey recruitment information to their current interns and alumni. Third, five posts with the survey recruitment information were submitted once a month to the school psychology focused Facebook group called "Said No School Psychologist Ever".

To complete the survey, participants must have completed some type of graduate training in school psychology (i.e., Master's, Specialist, Doctoral). Despite the effect of the global pandemic on graduate students' ability to complete in-person practicum/field experiences, currently practicing school psychologists should have already completed

these experiences as part of their graduate training. Ideally, practitioners will have completed a similar amount of practicum/field experiences during their graduate training depending on the type of degree earned. It is also probable that practicing school psychologists will have had the opportunity to work with EBL students in some capacity within their practitioner role. Therefore, practitioners should be knowledgeable on how these experiences have prepared them.

The survey recorded 158 responses with varying levels of completeness. Eighteen participants responded that they were not practicing school psychologists and could not be included in the sample. Of the remaining 135 responses, 111 were 100% completed, 10 were between 70% and 99% complete, and 19 were between 4% and 69% complete. Responding “no” to this question sent respondents directly to the end of the questionnaire. Forty-eight percent of respondents had received an Education Specialist degree ( $n = 65$ ), 22% had received a Doctoral degree ( $n = 30$ ), 13% were current interns ( $n = 17$ ), 10% had received a Master’s ( $n = 14$ ), and 7% had received another type of degree or were working toward another degree (e.g., Masters working toward PsyD, Specialist in School Psychology (S.S.P.), etc.) ( $n = 10$ ). Eighty-eight percent of respondents reported graduating from a NASP approved school psychology program ( $n = 119$ ), and 12% of respondents reported graduating from a school psychology graduate program that was not NASP approved ( $n = 16$ ). Eighty-eight percent of respondents identified as being female ( $n = 119$ ), 10% identified as being male ( $n = 14$ ), less than 1% identified as non-binary ( $n = 1$ ), and less than 1% preferred not to specify ( $n = 1$ ). Seventy-six percent of respondents were White ( $n = 103$ ), 13% were Latinx ( $n = 18$ ), 4%

were Asian ( $n = 5$ ), 3% chose Other (e.g., Mixed Race, Hispanic, etc.) ( $n = 4$ ), 1.5% were Black or African American ( $n = 2$ ), 1.5% were American Indian or Alaska Native ( $n = 2$ ), and 1% were Middle Eastern ( $n = 1$ ). Respondents were able to self-identify under a number of categories of ethnicity. These categories were somewhat generalized (e.g., Latinx, Asian, etc.) and included an "other" category where respondents could type in their own response (e.g., mixed race, etc.). Thus, it is suspected that a broader range of ethnicity is represented in the sample than the six categories that were reported. A more detailed breakdown of education, gender, and ethnicity categories can be seen in Table B1 in Appendix B. Additionally, respondents reported having completed graduate training in thirty-two different states.

Sixty-four percent of respondents reported that they did not speak another language other than English ( $n = 84$ ), 27% reported speaking two languages including English (e.g., bilingual) ( $n = 34$ ), 8% reported speaking three languages including English (e.g., trilingual) ( $n = 10$ ), and less than 1% reported speaking four languages including English ( $n = 1$ ). Seventy-six percent of respondents reported English as their first language ( $n = 102$ ), 7% reported Spanish as their first language ( $n = 10$ ), 1.5% reported American Sign Language as their first language ( $n = 2$ ), less than 1% reported Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin, or other variety) as their first language ( $n = 1$ ), less than 1% reported Korean as their first language ( $n = 1$ ), less than 1% reported Russian as their first language ( $n = 1$ ), and less than 1% reported Urdu as their first language ( $n = 1$ ). A total of 17 languages, including English, were reported to be spoken by this sample. A breakdown of the language demographics for this sample can be found in Table B2.

This sample is somewhat similar to the demographics of school psychologists who completed the NASP Membership Survey in 2020. The NASP (2020) survey found that respondents were predominantly female (87.3%) or white (85.9%). In this sample, the majority of respondents were also female (88.2%) or white (76.3%). There was a larger representation of school psychologists of color, specifically those that identify as Latinx. Thirteen percent of respondents in this study identified as Latinx compared to 7.7% of NASP members in 2020. Additionally, the majority of respondents had completed a specialist level degree (68.6%). Although the current study included interns who had not yet completed their degree, the majority of respondents had completed a specialist level degree (48.2%). The current sample is likely most different from the sample obtained by NASP in 2020 in the number of respondents who reported being monolingual. In the NASP (2020) sample 92% of participants indicated being monolingual whereas only 64% of the current sample reported being monolingual with the remaining 36% speaking two or more languages.

### **Results**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate what types of EBL-related field and practicum experiences were most influential in practitioners feeling prepared to provide services to EBL students. Participants were asked whether they had participated in certain EBL-related field and practicum experiences as part of their graduate training. Participants were also asked regarding their confidence in their ability to engage in said practices and how well prepared by their graduate training they felt to participate in said practices.

Because this questionnaire had not been used in previous research, an exploratory factor analysis to identify any underlying factors was conducted on questions regarding participants' confidence in their current ability to provide certain services to EBL students and how they felt their graduate training prepared them to provide certain services to EBL students. Correlation analysis found that most of these items had some correlation with each other ranging from  $r = 0.20$  for Items Q31c and Q36b to  $r = 0.87$  for Items Q32b and Q33b. Means, standard deviations, and correlations with confidence intervals for these items can be found in Table B3.

Bartlett's test of sphericity was used to test the overall significance of all the correlations between the selected items within the correlation matrix. The test was significant,  $\chi^2(11) = 404.66, p < 0.001$ , indicating that it was appropriate to conduct a factor analysis on these items. A principle component analysis found twelve components. Statistics, including the eigenvalues for those components, can be found in Table B4.

Factor analysis of the items used in the current study revealed two factors were sufficient to explain the underlying structure of how confident school psychologists are providing services to EBL students,  $X^2(43) = 296.17, p < 0.001$ . The first factor had a high eigenvalue of 6.66, and it accounted for 55.5% of the variance in the data. Factor two had an eigenvalue of 1.59 and accounted for an additional 13.2% of the variance. The pattern matrix in Table B5 revealed factor one to consist of six items and was labeled Confidence. The second factor consisted of six items and was labeled Prepared by Program.



Both factors were found to have high internal consistency, Confidence ( $\alpha = 0.896$ ) and Prepared by Program ( $\alpha = 0.913$ ). Average scores were obtained from items in each of these factors to be used as dependent variables (DVs) representing each of the underlying constructs, practitioners' confidence in their ability to engage in EBL-related practices and how well prepared by their graduate training they felt to participate in said practices. Each variable was tested for normality to determine whether they could be used as DVs in further analysis. Shapiro-Wilk tests were performed for each variable and showed that the distribution of the Confidence variable did not show evidence of non-normality ( $W = 0.99, p = 0.26$ ) and the distribution of the Prepared by Program variable departed significantly from normality ( $W = 0.98, p = 0.02$ ). Based on these outcomes and after visual analysis of histograms of both variables, it was determined that both the Confidence and Prepared by Program variables could be used as a DVs in answering the study's primary research questions. However, caution should be used when considering the results of the analyses that used the Prepared by Program due to the non-normality found by the Shapiro-Wilks test.

**What types of EBL-related field/practicum experiences influence how prepared school psychologists feel to address those issues?**

Participants were asked questions regarding the types of EBL-related field experiences they completed during field and practicum experiences as a school psychology graduate student. These experiences included 1) serving a high number of CLD students, 2) being assigned to supervisors that had training or experience working with diverse populations, 3) working face-to-face with EBL students, 4) completing

specific practicum requirements regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.), and 5) experiences in settings where English is not the only language spoken (e.g., study abroad, dual immersion, etc.).

Each of the five types of EBL-related experiences were regressed on the Prepared by Program variable. At each step, the variable that had the lowest correlation with the Prepared by Program scale and met the elimination criterion (i.e., had a p-value  $> 0.1$ ) was removed from the model. Results for the backward stepwise linear regression can be found in Table B6. The final model of this backward stepwise linear regression included Q17, experiences completed in school with high number of CLD students ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and Q20, completing specific practicum requirements regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.) ( $\beta = .31$ ,  $p = .002$ ). This model was found to be the best predictor of how well respondents felt their program had prepared them to provide service to EBL students (multiple  $R^2 = 0.25$ ,  $p > .001$ ).

**What types of EBL-related field and practicum experiences are most influential in practitioners feeling confident in their ability provide services to EBL students?**

A backward stepwise linear regression was also used to identify possible predictors of practitioners' confidence in their ability to engage in EBL-related practices out of the types of EBL-related field experiences. Results for the backward stepwise linear regression can be found in Table B7. Starting with the five types of EBL-related field experiences that may be good predictors for school psychologists' confidence in their ability to engage in EBL-related practices, a backward stepwise linear regression model was used to reduce them to the final model which only included Q20, completing

specific practicum requirements regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.) (adjusted  $R^2=0.10$ ,  $\beta= .33$ ,  $p=.001$ ).

### **Additional Factors**

A number of additional factors that may be influential in practitioners feeling prepared to provide services to EBL students were also investigated. These included the number of EBL-related field and practicum experiences practitioners had completed, what experiences practitioners believed were most influential (e.g., professional development, work experience, field and practicum experiences, etc.), and having a large percentage of CLD students in the district where the practitioners serve.

There was a moderate positive relationship between the number of EBL-related field and practicum experiences practitioners had completed and school psychologists' reported confidence in their ability to engage in EBL-related practices ( $r=0.31$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

When asked which experience practitioners believed had best prepared them to work with EBL students, 26% of respondents reported professional development in EBL-related issues ( $n = 31$ ), 26% reported work experiences as a practicing school psychologist ( $n = 31$ ), 21% reported EBL-related field and practicum experiences ( $n = 25$ ), 19% reported internship experiences ( $n = 23$ ), 3% reported other work experiences outside of practicing as a school psychologist ( $n = 4$ ), 2% chose all of the experiences ( $n = 3$ ), 2% reported personal experiences (e.g., living in another country, etc.) ( $n = 3$ ), less than 1% reported graduate course work ( $n = 1$ ). A Spearman's correlation indicated a moderate positive relationship between how often practitioners reported engaging in EBL-related professional development and their reported confidence in their ability to

engage in EBL-related practices ( $r=0.41, p<.001$ ). There was a strong positive relationship between the number of years a school psychologist reported having worked with EBL students and their reported confidence in their ability to engage in EBL-related practices ( $r=0.51, p<.001$ ). Because internship experiences may contain certain requirements related to EBL students they were not included under “work experiences”. Additionally, EBL-related internship experiences were not investigated in the questionnaire. Thus, they could not be further investigated as an additional factor. All other experiences had low response rates (i.e., < 5%) and were not investigated as additional factors.

Finally, there was a moderate positive relationship between the percent of CLD students in a practitioner’s district and their reported confidence in their ability to engage in EBL-related practices ( $r=0.33, p=.003$ ).

### **Discussion**

The primary purpose of the study was to investigate what types of EBL-related field and practicum experiences were most influential in practitioners’ perceptions of their ability to provide services to EBL students. This investigated how practitioners felt their graduate program had prepared them and their current confidence in their ability to provide school psychological services to EBL students. An investigation of multiculturally focused school psychology graduate programs identified five common EBL focused field and practicum experiences. These experiences were 1) serving a high number of CLD students, 2) being assigned to supervisors that had training or experience working with diverse populations, 3) working face-to-face with EBL students, 4)

completing specific practicum requirements regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.), and 5) experiences in settings where English is not the only language spoken (e.g., study abroad, dual immersion, etc.). The results of the study suggest that, of the five types of EBL focused experiences, completing specific practicum requirements regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.) was influential in practitioners' confidence in their ability to engage in EBL-related practices, accounting for approximately 10% of the variation in practitioners' confidence to provide services to EBL students. This finding suggests that engaging in specific and directed EBL-related practices during field and practicum experiences during graduate training are likely influential in school psychologists' confidence to engage in EBL-related practices in the future as practitioners. This idea is supported by Johnson and colleagues (2016) in that, meaningful and relevant experiences improve self-efficacy in related tasks. Similarly, it was found that these structured EBL field and practicum experiences were also influential in how respondents felt their graduate programs had prepared them to provide services to EBL students. Field and practicum experiences obtained settings with high numbers of CLD students were also found to be influential in respondents feeling prepared to address EBL-related issues by their training program. However, while these findings are congruent with other finding within this study, caution should be used due to the non-normality of the Prepared by Program variable. Additional statistical transformations should be conducted on the Prepared by Program variable to help account for its non-normality.

Additional factors related to school psychologists' confidence in providing services to EBL students were also investigated. It appeared that having more EBL-related field and practicum experiences contributed to more confidence serving EBL students. Some of the types of experiences included were pulled directly from research that identified exemplary multicultural school psychology training programs (Rogers, 2006). Examples included working directly with CLD students and having student competencies assessed (i.e., completing goals or requirements providing services to EBL students). This finding also supports the theoretical framework used in this study and the hypothesis that school psychology graduate students could benefit from similar high-quality and meaningful multicultural experiences, specifically with EBLs. Field and practicum experiences were identified by many participants (21%) as being most helpful in preparing them to provide services to EBL students. Professional development and work experience were also identified as being most helpful in preparing participants to provide services to EBL students with 26% of responses each. The median amount of experience for practitioners that selected field and practicum experiences was 3 years whereas the median amount of experience for practitioners that selected professional development or work experiences were 7.5 years and 8 years respectively. It is possible that early career school psychologists rely more on their field and practicum experiences when providing services to EBL students until they are able to obtain more significant experience through professional development and work as a school psychologist. Each of these additional factors were correlated with more confidence in providing services to EBL students. Internship experiences were also reported by many practitioners as being

most helpful in preparing them to provide services to EBL students with 19% of responses. Similar to those that reported field and practicum experiences, the median amount of experience for practitioners that selected internship experiences was 3 years.

Fifty-six percent of respondents ( $n = 71$ ) indicated that they had completed specific practicum requirements regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.) during field and practicum experiences. A large number of these respondents had completed their school psychology graduate training in the West ( $n = 33$ ), specifically in California ( $n = 12$ ) and Utah ( $n = 12$ ). It is possible that these practitioners graduated from programs that have a multicultural focus as both California and Utah have universities with self-proclaimed multiculturally focused school psychology graduate programs.

Several of the hypotheses presented in this study were supported by the results. A prominent finding of this study is that school psychologists felt more confident in their ability to provide services to EBL students when they had completed specific goals regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.) during field experiences and practicum. This aligns with research conducted by Pollard-Durodola and Miller (2020). In addition, interns noted that they felt they had benefited from specific programmatic experiences (e.g., on-site clinic opportunities). These findings support the hypothesis that more structured experiences (e.g., having specific EBL-related field and practicum experience goals) would be most influential in helping school psychologists to feel prepared to address EBL-related issues. Although EBL-related goals were found to be the primary factor, it is likely that other types of

EBL-related field and practicum are influential in a school psychologist's confidence providing services to EBL students. Interns surveyed by Pollard-Durodola and Miller (2020) felt the need for more varied and comprehensive field training experiences (e.g., working with interpreters, crisis counseling, educating parents about culturally driven mental health stigmas, communicating about risk assessments with sensitivity to culturally diverse parents). Results within this study also support the need of more varied and comprehensive experiences with EBLs and support the hypothesis that having numerous field/practicum experiences with EBLs and having experiences that allow for increased exposure to EBL students influence school psychologists' confidence providing services to EBLs.

Another purpose of this study was to address certain limitations noted in Rogers and colleagues (2021). One limitation addressed in this study was investigating these specific aspects of EBL-related field and practicum experiences. Rogers and colleagues (2021) investigated the requirement of EBL-related field and practicum but did not specify what these experiences might look like. The current study used specific aspects found in exemplary multicultural school psychology graduate training programs. However, future research should further investigate the true impact of specific goals and requirements as well as further investigate the other aspects of EBL-related field and practicum experiences. Additionally, by surveying practicing school psychologists, this study was able to obtain a better sample regarding the types of EBL-related field and practicum experiences completed by school psychologists and more accurately depict



school psychologists' confidence providing services to EBLs that was not possible surveying current graduate students.

### **Implications for Training and Future Research**

Results of this study suggest that completing specific field experience and practicum requirements regarding EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.) are influential in practitioners' confidence in their ability to engage in EBL-related practices. The likelihood that school psychologists will have to provide services to EBL students is increasing. The percentage of public-school students in the United States who were English learners (ELs) was higher in fall 2019 (10.4%) than in fall 2010 (9.2%) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). In fall 2019, the percentage of public-school students who were ELs ranged from 0.8% in West Virginia to 19.6% in Texas. Participants in this study reported varied experience providing services to EBL students. Some practitioners reported having never worked with an EBL student while others reported few experiences to working regularly with EBL students. Despite the varied experience of this sample, when known, respondents ( $n = 77$ ) reported working in districts that had some percentage of CLD students. Thus, confidence in one's ability to provide services to EBL students is something that many school psychologists will likely need at some point in their career. Accordingly, it is important for school psychology graduate programs to effectively prepare future practitioners. Results of this study suggest that including EBL-related field experience and practicum requirements may impact future practitioners' confidence providing services to EBL students. Therefore, training programs should consider including EBL-related goals and

requirements in field and practicum experiences. It is important to identify factors that can be applied within school psychology graduate training programs. Of the types of experiences investigated in this study, specific field experience and practicum requirements regarding EBL-related issues should be relatively feasible as they do not require specialized settings (e.g., dual immersion, etc.), specialized supervision, or knowledge of a second language.

Additional research is needed in several areas related to EBL focused field and practicum experiences. This includes further investigation of the types of requirements (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.) that school psychology graduate students are completing and how the specific requirements may impact a practitioner's future ability to provide specific services to EBL students. Additionally, more research is needed specific to how school psychology graduate programs include these goals and requirements in field experiences and investigate the feasibility of other programs to include these goals. EBL-related internship goals and requirements should also be investigated as they may be similar to and /or supplement field experience and practicum requirements. Although not found to be significant factors within this research, future research should further investigate the importance of other aspects of EBL-related field experiences such as working in schools with a high number of CLD students and working face to face with EBL students.

### **Limitations**

This study includes several limitations. The primary limitation of this study was difficulty obtaining responses that would be sufficient for robust statistical analysis.

There has been a notable decrease in response rates to survey research throughout and after the COVID-19 pandemic. This decrease in response rates have been seen in a number of fields that use survey research. The U.S. Census Bureau (Rothbaum & Bee, 2022) note a significant drop in response rates to basic household surveys reporting that in March 2018 84% of sampled U.S. households responded. This dropped to 76% in March 2021 and to 72% during March 2022. De Koning and colleagues (2021) note that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a surge in research activity and survey-based studies due to restricted data collection methods that could be used during the pandemic. They report anecdotal evidence in the field of neurosurgical survey research of a phenomenon they term “survey fatigue”. In other words, in an increase in survey type research which has led to a decrease in responses to survey research. As noted previously, there was a large number of respondents who spoke more than one language. This overrepresentation of multilingual school psychologists represents potential participation bias within this type of research. Multilingual school psychologists already make up a small percentage (~8%) of school psychologists (Goforth et al., 2021). It is likely that factors such as “survey fatigue” and participation bias were influential in the lower-than-expected response rate. Additional recruitment methods should be used in the future to help account for these and other potential factors that could affect response rate.

Due to the lower response rate, several of the characteristics of the sample and response patterns make it difficult to generalize the results of the study to all school psychology graduate training programs. A larger sample size is needed to meet certain assumptions for further statistical analysis. First, power could not be obtained for certain

statistical analyses based on the overall sample size. Second, although power was obtained, normality was not obtained for certain questions (e.g., questions related to feeling prepared by graduate programs). Thus, these questions could not be included in analyses. Additionally, this sample was somewhat similar to NASP membership in 2020. However, there were certain differences within this sample that may make it difficult to generalize the results of this study. These differences were similar to those found in Rogers and colleagues (2021). Latinx respondents made up 13% of the sample while only 7% of NASP members identified as Latinx on the 2020 membership survey. The largest difference was seen in the number respondents who spoke more than one language. Thirty-six percent of the current sample reported speaking two or more languages compared 8% of the NASP (2020) sample. The relatively high portion of respondents who identified as Latinx or spoke more than one language suggest potential participation bias. It is possible that more Latinx and/or multilingual respondents chose to complete the questionnaire because of their interest in or closeness to EBL-related issues. Additionally, a large number of respondents that had completed EBL specific goals in field and practicum experiences had completed their graduate training in the West. While not addressed in the questionnaire, there is possible participation bias based on where participants completed their school psychology graduate training. Future research should take into account which specific programs are providing school psychology graduate students with field and practicum experiences that are contributing to their future confidence providing services to EBL students. Finally, normality was not found for the

Prepared by Program variable. Thus, results from the analyses that used the Prepared by Program variable should be interpreted with caution.

### **Conclusion**

School psychology graduate training programs are an integral piece in preparing future school psychology practitioners with skills they will need in order to address a wide range of issues they will face in schools. Field and practicum experiences are critical in providing graduate students with experiences and practice building skills they will eventually rely on as they continue to build skills and competencies through internship and beyond. It is critical that graduate students have adequate and meaningful experiences during field experiences and practicum.

The results of this study suggest that goals during field and practicum experiences focused specifically on EBL-related issues (e.g., assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.) can have a positive influence on school psychologists' confidence providing necessary services to EBL students. As the demographics of school students continue to change and the number of EBL students increase, it will become increasingly more likely that school psychologists will be presented with opportunities and the responsibility of providing services to EBL students. Thus, it is important that school psychology graduate training programs can provide students with meaningful and guided experiences that will help prepare them for these future opportunities. School psychologists are thoroughly trained to help students in many different ways. Specific and guided field and practicum experiences in EBL-related issues can give students the opportunity to practice these skills in ways that they may not get otherwise. Increased

opportunities during graduate training can help ensure that school psychologists are confident providing services to EBL students when the opportunities arise.

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## Appendix A: Questionnaire

### School Psychology Graduate Training EBL Field/Practicum Experience

#### Questionnaire

Terms Detailed below are a few terms relevant to the content of this survey and will be used throughout.

Terms:

Emergent Bilingual Learner (EBL) - Traditionally, a variety of terms have been used to define the population of students whose first language is not English and as a result are learning English as a second language (e.g., English language learner (ELL), English as a second language (ESL), dual language learner (DLL), English as an Additional Language (EAL), etc.). In this questionnaire the term Emergent Bilingual Learner (EBL) will be used to describe this group of students. It is believed that the term EBL more appropriately places the student on a continuum of bilingualism and removes the categorization of the student as either limited English proficient or English proficient.

First Language – Often referred to as the first language you learned as a child. This could also be defined as the language that was used in your home or the primary language of the country you were born. First language is also described in relation to a second language as the language one uses as the basis to learn another foreign language.

Second Language – Any language whose acquisition starts after a first or native language is established. This can be after early childhood and includes what may be the third or any other subsequent languages learned.

I understand

#### Demographics

Q1 Are you a practicing school psychologist placed in a setting where you provide school psychology services to students?

Yes

No

---

Q2 Please indicate the degree you obtained in school psychology.

- a) Masters
  - b) Education Specialist
  - c) PhD
  - d) PsyD
  - e) EdD
  - f) Current Intern
  - g) Other (Please Specify)
- 

- h) I did not complete graduate training in school psychology
- 

Q3 How do you identify your gender?

- Male
  - Female
  - Non-binary / third gender
  - Prefer not to specify
  - Other (Please Specify)
-

Q4 How do you identify your race?

- White
  - Black or African American
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - Latinx
  - Other (Please Specify)
- 

Q5  
How many languages other than English do you speak fluently?

Q5a  
Please indicate all languages you speak fluently.

Language 1

---

Q5b Language 2 (If Applicable)

---

Q5c Language 3 (If Applicable)

---

Q5d Language 4 (If Applicable)

---

Q6 If applicable, please indicate any other languages you speak fluently.

---

---

Q7 How many years of experience do you have working as a school psychologist?

---

Q8 If known, please indicate the percent of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) students in your district.

**Graduate Training**

Q9 Was your school psychology program approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)?

Yes

No

---

Q10 In what state was your school psychology graduate training program located?

---

Q11 In what state do you currently practice school psychology?

---

Q12 Were you ever enrolled in a program or track toward certification as a bilingual school psychologist?

Yes

No

---



Q13 Have you completed a program or track for certification as a bilingual school psychologist?

Yes

No

---

Q14 Were any field/practicum experiences specific to EBL-related issues required as part of your graduate training?

Yes

No

Unsure

---

Q15 Were any field/practicum experiences specific to EBL-related issues offered as options during your graduate training?

Yes

No

Unsure

---

Q16 Were you able to pursue experiences specific to EBL-related issues as part of your graduate training?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**Types of EBL-related Field/Practicum Experiences**

Q17 Did you complete any field/practicum experiences in schools serving a high number of CLD students?

- Yes
  - No
  - Unsure
- 

Q18 Did you complete any field/practicum experiences for which you were assigned to supervisors that had training or experience working with diverse populations?

- Yes
  - No
  - Unsure
-

Q19 Did you complete any field/practicum experiences during which you worked face-to-face with EBL students?

- Yes
  - No
  - Unsure
- 

Q20

Did you complete any field/practicum experiences that included specific goals regarding EBL-related issues (e.g. assessment of EBL student, working with interpreters, etc.)?

- Yes
  - No
  - Unsure
- 

Q21 Did you complete any field/practicum experiences in settings where a language other than English was the primary language spoken (e.g. study abroad, dual immersion schools, etc.)?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**Current Practice with EBL Students**

Q22 When possible, how often do you use a second language when providing school psychology services to EBL students?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Q23 [If Applicable] Please select any of the following instances that you utilize the second language?

- Spoken communication with student
  - Spoken communication with parents/guardians/family of student
  - Written communication with student
  - Written communication with parents/guardians/family of student
  - Cognitive assessment
  - Rating scales
  - Report writing
  - Implementing interventions
  - Other (Please explain any other instances)
- 
-

Q24 Are you certified as a Bilingual School Psychologist?

Yes

No

---

Q25 Did you pass a proficiency exam in another language to become certified as a Bilingual School Psychologist?

Yes

No

---

Q26 How long ago did you complete your school psychology graduate training?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q27

How many years of experience do you have working with EBL students?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q28 How often do you participate in professional development (e.g. training, seminars, etc.) that focuses on providing school psychology services to EBL students?

- Always
  - Often
  - Sometimes
  - Rarely
  - Never
- 

Q29 Which experience do you believe has best prepared you to work with EBL students?

- Field and Practicum Experiences
  - Internship Experiences
  - Work Experiences as a Practicing School Psychologist
  - Professional development
  - Other (Please specify)
- 

Q30 (Optional) Please explain any other experiences that you believe have been influential in preparing you to provide school psychology services to EBL students.

---

### **Self-Reported Practices**

Q31a

Communicating with EBL students and their families

How often do you engage in communication with EBL students and their parents/guardians/family via interpreters?

1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always

Q31b How confident are you in your ability to engage in communication with EBL students and their parents/guardians/family via interpreters?

0 (not at all confident), 5 (moderately confident), and 10 (extremely confident)

Q31c I feel that my graduate training appropriately prepared me to engage in communication with EBL students and their parents/guardians/family via interpreters?

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Q32a

Identifying evidence-based interventions for EBL students

How often do you identify evidence-based interventions for EBL students?

1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always

Q32b How confident are you in your ability to identify evidence-based interventions for EBL students?

0 (not at all confident), 5 (moderately confident), and 10 (extremely confident)

Q32c

I feel that my graduate training appropriately prepared me to identify evidence-based interventions for EBL students?

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Q33a

Planning and implementing evidence-based interventions for EBL students

How often do you plan and implement evidence-based interventions for EBL students?

1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always

Q33b

How confident are you in your ability to plan and implement evidence-based interventions for EBL students?

0 (not at all confident), 5 (moderately confident), and 10 (extremely confident)

Q33c

I feel that my graduate training appropriately prepared me to plan and implement evidence-based interventions for EBL students?

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Q34a

Selecting and distributing rating scales (e.g. adaptive, social-behavioral, etc.) for EBL students

How often do you select and distribute rating scales (e.g. adaptive, social-behavioral, etc.) for EBL students?

1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always

Q34b

How confident are you in your ability to select and distribute rating scales (e.g. adaptive, social-behavioral, etc.) for EBL students?

0 (not at all confident), 5 (moderately confident), and 10 (extremely confident)

Q34c

I feel that my graduate training appropriately prepared me to select and distribute rating scales (e.g. adaptive, social-behavioral, etc.) for EBL students?



1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Q35a

Selecting and conducting cognitive assessments for EBL students

How often do you select and conduct cognitive assessments for EBL students?

1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always

Q35b

How confident are you in your ability to select and conduct cognitive assessments for EBL students?

0 (not at all confident), 5 (moderately confident), and 10 (extremely confident)

Q35c

I feel that my graduate training appropriately prepared me to select and conduct cognitive assessments for EBL students?

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Q36a

Reporting and interpreting assessment results for EBL students

How often do you report and interpret assessment results for EBL students?

1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always

Q36b

How confident are you in your ability to report and interpret assessment results for EBL students?

0 (not at all confident), 5 (moderately confident), and 10 (extremely confident)

Q36c

I feel that my graduate training appropriately prepared me to report and interpret assessment results for EBL students?

1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

**Appendix B: Tables**

**Table B1**

*Demographic Information*

	<i>N</i>	Percent	<i>n (%)</i> Missing
<b>Degree</b>			0(0%)
Specialist	65	48.15	
Doctoral	30	22.22	
Intern	17	12.59	
Master's	14	10.37	
Other	9	6.67	
<b>NASP Accredited</b>			7(5%)
Yes	119	92.97	
No	9	7.03	
<b>Gender</b>			0(0%)
Female	119	88.15	
Male	14	10.37	
Non-binary / third gender	1	0.74	
Prefer not to specify	1	0.74	
<b>Ethnicity</b>			0(0%)
White	103	76.30	
Latinx	18	13.33	
Asian	5	3.70	
Other	4	2.96	
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	1.48	

Black or African American	2	1.48
Middle Eastern	1	0.74

*Note.* Missing percent is based on total  $n = 135$ .

**Table B2**

*Language Demographics*

	<i>N</i>	Percent	<i>n (%)</i> Missing
<b>Number of Languages Spoken</b>			9(7%)
Monolingual	81	64.29	
Bilingual	34	26.98	
Trilingual	10	7.94	
Multilingual (4+)	1	0.79	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Language</b>			17(13%)
English	102	86.44	
Spanish	10	8.47	
American Sign Language (ASL)	2	1.69	
Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin, or other variety)	1	0.85	
Korean	1	0.85	
Russian	1	0.85	
Urdu	1	0.85	
<b>Languages Spoken</b>			0(0%)
English <sup>1</sup>	135	100	
Spanish	19	14	
Hebrew	3	2	
American Sign Language	3	2	
Hmong	2	1	

Arabic	1	1
French or French Creole	1	1
German	1	1
Italian	1	1
Portuguese	1	1
Tai–Kadai (including Thai or Lao)	1	1
Turkish	1	1
Bulgarian	1	1
Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin, or other variety)	1	1
Korean	1	1
Russian	1	1
Urdu	1	1

---

*Note.* Missing percent is based on total  $n = 135$ .

<sup>1</sup> 100 percent of respondents spoke English whether as their first language or an additional language.

**Table B3**

*Means, standard deviations, and correlations of EBL Services Items*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Q3 1b	6.25	2.56	-										
2. Q3 1c	3.07	1.16	.46*	-									
3. Q3 2b	4.60	2.60	.52*	.40*	-								
4. Q3 2c	2.81	1.23	.30*	.52*	.63*	-							
5. Q3 3b	4.17	2.68	.49*	.31*	.87*	.59*	-						
6. Q3 3c	2.63	1.12	.34*	.59*	.63*	.83*	.66*	-					
7. Q3 4b	6.22	2.58	.57*	.29*	.65*	.47*	.57*	.48*	-				
8. Q3 4c	3.22	1.14	.29*	.48*	.39*	.54*	.33*	.62*	.64*	-			
9. Q3 5b	5.72	2.71	.38*	.19*	.61*	.47*	.55*	.38*	.58*	.35*	-		
10. Q3 5c	3.19	1.12	.22*	.49*	.39*	.64*	.37*	.63*	.38*	.65*	.57*	-	
11. Q3 6b	5.59	2.64	.46*	.20*	.61*	.45*	.62*	.39*	.68*	.38*	.84*	.48*	-
12. Q3 6c	2.99	1.22	.31*	.50*	.44*	.70*	.45*	.69*	.46*	.67*	.49*	.83*	.54*

Note. \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .01$ .

**Table B4**  
*Principle Component Analysis of EBL Services Items*

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction of Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
<b>1</b>	6.657	55.48%	55.48%	6.657	55.48%	55.48%
<b>2</b>	1.585	13.20%	68.68%	1.585	13.20%	68.68%
<b>3</b>	1.068	8.90%	77.58%	1.068	8.90%	77.58%
<b>4</b>	0.857	7.14%	84.72%	0.857	7.14%	84.72%
<b>5</b>	0.618	5.15%	89.87%	0.618	5.15%	89.87%
<b>6</b>	0.298	2.48%	92.35%	0.298	2.48%	92.35%
<b>7</b>	0.261	2.17%	94.53%	0.261	2.17%	94.53%
<b>8</b>	0.223	1.86%	96.38%	0.223	1.86%	96.38%
<b>9</b>	0.147	1.23%	97.61%	0.147	1.23%	97.61%
<b>10</b>	0.118	0.98%	98.59%	0.118	0.98%	98.59%
<b>11</b>	0.094	0.78%	99.38%	0.094	0.78%	99.38%
<b>12</b>	0.075	0.62%	100.00%	0.075	0.62%	100.00%

**Table B5**  
*Factor Analysis Pattern Matrix for EBL Services Items*

Scale Items	Factor 1	Factor 2
Factor 1: Confidence		
31b. Communicating	<b>.56</b>	
32b. Identifying Interventions	<b>.57</b>	.31
33b. Planning Interventions	<b>.57</b>	.32
34b. Selecting and Interpreting Rating Scales	<b>.80</b>	
35b. Selecting and Cognitive Assessment	<b>1.05</b>	
36b. Reporting and Interpreting Assessment	<b>1.02</b>	
Factor 2: Prepared by Program		
31c. Communicating		<b>.59</b>
32c. Identifying Interventions		<b>1.08</b>
33c. Planning Interventions		<b>1.06</b>
34c. Selecting and Interpreting Rating Scales		<b>.61</b>
35c. Selecting and Cognitive Assessment		<b>.56</b>
36c. Reporting and Interpreting Assessment		<b>.49</b>

**Table B6**

*Prepared by Program Backward Stepwise Regression Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	p-value
1	Intercept	1.999	0.193		10.356	0.000
	Q17	0.454	0.256	0.217	1.771	0.080
	Q18	-0.001	0.252	-0.001	-0.004	0.997
	Q19	0.453	0.276	0.196	1.638	0.105
	Q20	0.398	0.228	0.195	1.741	0.085
	Q21	0.213	0.214	0.095	1.000	0.320
2	Intercept	1.999	0.189		10.593	0.000
	Q17	0.453	0.222	0.217	2.042	0.044*
	Q19	0.453	0.271	0.196	1.672	0.098
	Q20	0.397	0.225	0.195	1.763	0.081
	Q21	0.214	0.212	0.095	1.006	0.317
3	Intercept	2.000	0.189		10.599	0.000
	Q17	0.480	0.220	0.229	2.178	0.032*
	Q19	0.438	0.270	0.189	1.619	0.109
	Q20	0.464	0.215	0.228	2.155	0.034*
4	Intercept	2.127	0.173		12.304	0.000
	Q17	0.637	0.200	0.305	3.191	0.002**
	Q20	0.619	0.195	0.304	3.183	0.002**

*Dependent Variable: Prepared by Program Scale*

**Table B7**  
*Confidence Backward Stepwise Regression Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	p-value
1	Intercept	4.207	0.483		8.712	0.000
	Q17	0.501	0.641	0.105	0.782	0.436
	Q18	-0.734	0.630	-0.153	-1.166	0.247
	Q19	0.560	0.692	0.106	0.810	0.420
	Q20	1.283	0.571	0.276	2.246	0.027*
	Q21	0.276	0.534	0.054	0.516	0.607
2	Intercept	4.210	0.481		8.753	0.000
	Q17	0.541	0.633	0.114	0.854	0.395
	Q18	-0.745	0.627	-0.155	-1.188	0.238
	Q19	0.542	0.688	0.103	0.788	0.432
	Q20	1.371	0.544	0.295	2.521	0.013*
3	Intercept	4.351	0.446		9.763	0.000
	Q17	0.686	0.605	0.144	1.135	0.260
	Q18	-0.658	0.616	-0.137	-1.068	0.288
	Q20	1.548	0.494	0.333	3.134	0.002**
4	Intercept	4.221	0.429		9.839	0.000
	Q17	0.315	0.495	0.066	0.635	0.527
	Q20	1.434	0.483	0.309	2.972	0.004**
5	Intercept	4.364	0.364		11.985	0.000
	Q20	1.548	0.447	0.333	3.462	0.001***

*Dependent Variable: Confidence Scale*