

## Exploring Educators' Perspectives on Implementing Dual-Language Immersion Education Programs among Sharjah Private School Students

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### Abstract

Since teachers and academic administrators are the main axes in the educational process, this study aimed to explore their perspectives on implementing dual-language immersion programs in Sharjah private schools. Moreover, it was keen to emphasize the importance of speaking two different languages for children's self-efficacy, life improvement, academic achievement, and community engagement, where the child in his early life stages is more able to comprehend, memorize, and learn. The research presents a study about children that are bilingual having better social interactions with people from different cultures. Dual-language programs might raise their chances of success in the real world and in the workplace, lead to new career prospects, and provide them with the ability to travel and interact with people from other cultures. Private schools that offer dual-language instruction guarantee that students will learn the second language at a level commensurate with their proficiency in the first. Moreover, the research refers to the large population diversity represented by the different nationalities, languages, and cultures located in the UAE, which helps to achieve this implementation. Furthermore, this study shows the encouragement and support of parents for their children to achieve this goal. The scope of the research was tight where it concentrated only on the Emirate of Sharjah. It should be expanded to include the seven emirates of the UAE and reach more educators' opinions from different

nationalities and different schools that follow different educational curriculums. Broadening the scope of the search and making it more comprehensive will ensure clearer and more accurate results.

**Keywords:** Dual-Language Immersion Programs, Teachers and Academic Administrators, Sharjah Private Schools.

## 1. Introduction

Bilingual education is regarded as an effective method of learning a new language, and it represents an increasingly popular pedagogic approach in many countries around the world, in which students study typical school subjects (e.g., math or science) in English as an additional language, and other subjects in Arabic as a native language, or they may study the same subject in two different languages. Bilingual education is the use of two languages as media of instruction for a child or a group of children in part or all of the school curriculum (Cohen, 1975).

Bilingual education provides several advantages for students in terms of their academic study and their future career, it also has a significant influence on their cultural and social development since children who grow up speaking English as a second language generally come from culturally varied households. Bilingual education researchers also feel that it is difficult to separate language and culture; hence, because language is the foundation of every society, bicultural education is a major component of bilingual education, and learning a language demand knowing about a particular culture (Buschenhofen, 1980). Bilingual education may divide into four categories, according to (Malarz, 1998): cognitive development, affective development, language progress, and cultural enrichment. There are three basic types of bilingual education programs: Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE), Maintenance Bilingual Education (MBE), and Immersion Bilingual Education (IBE). (Baker, 2001) and (Oka, 1996).

TBE is a program designed to help English learners achieve long-term academic success through English-medium instruction in public classrooms, provided that the English learner's native language is used to support the student's development of English and content learning and is gradually phased out of education as the student's English ingenuity enhances. The purpose of TBE programs is to integrate English language learners into mainstream English classrooms as soon as they have developed adequate English language competency to engage meaningfully in

such settings. Teachers in TBE classrooms raised English language learners' spoken English ability by using academic English language frequently within an upgraded organized curriculum.

Results back up that classroom instruction is an important element in English language learners' success (Foorman et al., 2006; Haager et al., 2003). TBE Programs are divided into two categories, the first type is the Early-Exit Bilingual Program, which is designed to provide aid to students to develop the English skills needed to succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom. The second type is a Late-Exit Bilingual Program, which provides less than half of the students' instruction in their primary language.

MBE is a program that aims to help people maintain and improve their first language while learning another one. This program is arranged into groups of people who speak the same native language, allowing them to use their mother tongue instructions to articulate in the new language they've acquired, allowing them to maintain their abilities while learning a new language. Educational policymakers and decision-makers do not favor MBE programs. However, some researchers such as Rossell & Ross (1986) believe that MBE programs with strong bicultural components may lower English language achievement while increasing the number of limited English-competent people. There are two types of MBE Programs. The first is the Static Bilingual Program, which maintains minority language skills. The second one is the Developmental Bilingual Program; this type aims to bring minorities' language capabilities to the desired level.

IBE is a bilingual and foreign language education model that originated in Canada. It varies from other types of bilingual and foreign language education in several key ways. The immersion program has been successful in teaching French to English speakers in Canada, as well as an increasing number of minority language children (Taylor, 1992). The terms "immersion" and "bilingual education" are unlike. Students are taught primarily in their native language in bilingual education classrooms before progressively transitioning into mainstream second language programs. Students in an immersion classroom get their education in both their native and target languages, whereas students from various linguistic backgrounds are often mixed in one classroom and share the same content.

In schools, the immersion language program can be divided into three parts. The first one is Total Immersion, in which the second language is taught to the entire class, Partial Immersion is the second option,

and it occurs when around half of the class time is spent studying the second language, resulting in a time split between the two languages, and the last one is Dual-Immersion, which is unique in bilingual education in they promote literacy and native language competence in two distinct languages for all learners in the curriculum.

The IBE program is a very important system where all academic disciplines are taught in two target languages, such as Arabic and English, under the IBE curriculum. This program should receive the most emphasis and should be the goal of every student since there are many advantages to absorbing two languages, including improved academic accomplishment, problem-solving abilities, and cultural sensitivity. According to a recent study from Northwestern University in Illinois, USA, speaking more than one language regularly strengthens the brain and prepares it to take on additional brain-challenging activities.

### 1.1. Immersion Bilingual Programs around the World

The French immersion program in Canada, the Canadian model as described by Edwards (1994) and Genesee (1998), has gained positive attention and spread rapidly in different parts of the world. By looking at the experiences of other countries in immersion programs worldwide for example, the European model in Marsh (2002) and Marsh et al. (2001) and the Hong Kong model presented by Lin and Man (2009) and Morris and Adamson (2010) it is noticed that because of the significant number of students who are unable to converse in the languages spoken in those nations, immersion programs have been formed. In 2003, Malaysia implemented a similar partial English immersion program in elementary schools, teaching mathematics and science in English Swee Heng and Tan, (2006), while in Brunei two further subjects, history, and geography, are also taught in English (Lin & Man, 2009). Other examples of immersion programs are the successful Swedish immersion in Finland (Harju-Luukkainen, 2013b), Basque, Catalan, and Valencian immersion in Spain (Xavier Vila, F., Lasagabaster, D., & Ramallo, F., 2017), and Estonian immersion for Russian-speaking students in Estonia (Soll, M., Salvet, S., and Masso. A., 2015).

### 1.2. The United Arab Emirates and its Cultural Diversity

The UAE region has a unique population structure, which is characterized by a large number of resident expatriates compared to the local native population (De Bel-Air, F, 2015). According to the UAE Population Statistics 2023, this multicultural region is considered a cultural melting point and a home to more than 200 nationalities of Arabs, Asians, Europeans, Australians,

North and South America, and from all around the world. This cultural diversity creates a conducive environment to transfer education from partial immersion to dual-language immersion programs easily. By keeping up with English, the Ministry of Education hopes to strengthen educational systems by adding more subjects in English, but at the same time, preserve culture, religion, and the Arabic language, according to the MOE website.

### 1.3. Emirate of Sharjah

The Emirate of Sharjah is the third largest emirate in terms of area and is considered the cultural capital of the United Arab Emirates. The Emirate of Sharjah is very interested in culture and education, as it was awarded the title of the Capital of Arab Culture in 1998. The percentage of non-Emirati expatriates is 87% of the total population of the Emirate of Sharjah, according to Al Bayan official newspaper, which published this result of the Sharjah census that took place during the year 2015 and announced by the Department of Statistics and Development Community in Sharjah. This percentage is evidence of the population diversity in this emirate, which is an incubator environment for the implementation of dual-language immersion programs.

### 1.4. The Importance of Dual-Language Immersion Programs

After the successful experience in Canada and other countries and the increasing importance of the English language in the UAE. The transition to a "Dual-Language Immersion Education" should be essential for the student's long-term success. True bilingualism occurs when a person can converse fluently in both their primary and second languages (Al-Issa, 2012). In recent years, there has been an increased interest in learning English as a second language additionally for preserving the native language, true, balanced bilingual education is a solution.

In comparing the influence of a minority (home, native) language to a majority (community, official) language It was noted that the minority language plays an important role in preserving intergenerational ties, fostering group identities, and preserving cultural heritage (Fishman, 2001). A case The Tapirape School, which is associated with the Brazilian-Indian tribe in central Brazil, is one example of how a proper bilingual education system has helped to preserve a minority native language (Farruggio, 2010).

English became the primary language of instruction in advanced education in the 1980s, and it is still the major language of high education until this day. (Burden-Leahy 2009). Because

English is required at the university level, schools should promote early English study to achieve complete bilingualism by graduation. The ability to communicate in English has grown increasingly vital in daily life operations (Al-Mansoori as cited in Troudi 2009).

The Arabic language is the official language of the UAE and an integral part of the Arab cultural identity (Gulf News, 2010). Arabic is the lifeline that runs through the Arab nation's hearts and minds as it is the language of the Holy Qur'an (Sayed, 2010). Yet it has been marginalized in daily use due to the dominance of English speakers, adding to concerns about the vitality of Arabic in the fields of education and research. Therefore, the English-Arabic immersion curriculum in the UAE aims to save the Arabic language from wastage by providing learners with a high level of proficiency in both languages and enabling them to participate effectively in the workplace and community. Additionally, it could develop literacy skills, and prepare learners to compete successfully in international exams, as well as prepare them to build a better educational, practical, and social future.

### 1.5. Students

In schools, after pupils are promoted from preschool, Cycle One is the first stage of formal education. It's better to start while children are young since they are more able to catch up on linguistic nuances, and the second language also acts as a medium of teaching (de Meja, 2002). The focus is on the content rather than the form of the language, stemming from the assumption that a first language is acquired relatively unconsciously (Baker, 2000).

Students begin the program with equal levels of second language proficiency, and the curriculum provides enough support for their native tongue. Secondly, immersion programs aim for additive bilingualism, which means that children acquire a second language at no cost to their native language. (Baker, 2000). Thirdly, most interaction with the second language occurs in the classroom, where the classroom culture of the local community is more important than the culture of the target language community (de Meja, 2002). Children are exposed to excellent new-age learning ways at a young age, and as a result, their capacity to acquire and comprehend is enhanced.

Because most students in UAE have diverse cultures and languages backgrounds, switching from partial immersion to dual immersion programs in private schools allows students to acquire a second language in-depth and receive the best learning experience, allowing them to become lifelong learners, experience high standards of education, and gain innovative awareness.

Moreover, listening to different languages in the community allows children to embrace new and multi-languages, resulting in a successful immersion educational program and improving schools in this region.

### **1.6. The Advantages of Implementing Dual-Language Immersion Programs among Students**

Bilingual and immersion education has lots of advantages. Cycle one pupils in UAE private schools should be encouraged to participate in extraordinary reading and co-curricular activities to increase their natural abilities and learn new skills for their overall development. Because it is a fundamental period and kids may acquire language skills properly. Immersion in language education in the early years of schooling can help youngsters gain confidence and improve learning in later years.

Moreover, students study academic subjects rather than just the language itself, and they gain cultural literacy as well as better cognitive abilities as a result of their capacity to converse with people from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They will develop their intellectual, emotional, and creative qualities, as well as academic progress (Fortune & Tedick, 2003). Furthermore, English-Arabic immersion is a unique experience that benefits children socially by providing early exposure to cultures they might not otherwise encounter daily, as well as developing the ability to make friends and connections with a diverse group of classmates from various cultures and nationalities.

### **1.7. Teachers and the Environment**

Classrooms are functional learning environments where classroom techniques and transitions move quickly. Teachers are native speakers of the target language and are dedicated to using it throughout the day, including during teaching, transitions, play, and mealtimes. Membership in a community of practice that promotes inquiry-based education; is a collection of attitudes that includes inquiry, dialogue, equity, authenticity, shared leadership, and service (Lieberman & Miller, 2008). Teachers are competent in assisting comprehension through nonverbal signals and effective teaching tactics. They are also extremely attentive to students' requirements and particular learning styles.

Teachers at schools should have the self-efficacy and professional growth necessary to impact students and improve their efficiency, motivation, abilities, and performance, as well as

provide a positive learning environment. Teachers are driven by moral responsibilities to their pupils and school immersion seeks to offer the amount and quality of involvement in the target language that ensures the development of a high degree of competency (Johnson & Swain, 1997). In addition, the classroom is a literacy-rich setting with drawings, infographics, labels, instructional tools, and other important visuals to aid in the support of the target language throughout the day.

Immersive learning experiences make education more enjoyable in general, especially in the UAE, where there are several languages and ethnicities. This variety is a useful tool for making immersive learning more active. Teachers should create exciting ways to deliver information that create positive experiences that lead to increased encouragement and willingness to learn and contribute to educational activities. Technologies, administration, and staff should be supportive and knowledgeable, and teachers should create exciting ways to deliver information that create positive experiences that lead to higher encouragement and willingness to learn and contribute to educational activities.

Bilingual teachers' behaviors can have a significant impact on students' learning opportunities in bilingual classes (Menken & Garcia, 2010; Zuiga, et al., 2017). They should employ a range of communication tactics to assist youngsters in completing the stages necessary to become immersion bilingual educators while also making them feel at ease. According to Garcia (2009), English immersion instructors' professional preparation is a key component for success in immersion. Therefore, teachers should discover their students' talents and interests to inspire them.

Moreover, it is clear from the comparative international research (Barber & Mourshed, 2007) that the teacher's excellence is the primary factor in student learning outcomes in general. Although children come to school with a variety of literacy histories from their communities, they all have the same intellectual capacity for literacy (Whitmore et al., 2005). The issue of quality teaching must continue to be a concurrent key reform target. Furthermore, administrators plan and build bridges between students' concerns, capabilities, skills, and personalities then they make connections between the children and curricular goals and standards to transfer them safely from the partial immersion phase to the full immersion phase.



### 1.8. Guardians and Family Support

English is widely used in the UAE alongside Arabic. In the United Arab Emirates, parents have started to expect their children to be bilingual and it becomes the main concern for parents in the UAE. They want their children to excel and develop their academic skills by acquiring two languages to make them better suited to life and work, so they support both languages throughout the toddler, preschool, and school years (Calderon, M.E, & Minaya-Rowe, L, 2003). Some parents worry their children will not be proficient in their first language skills if they attend immersive bilingual programs. Parents of typically developing children sometimes express reservations that bilingualism may cause confusion and hinder their child's linguistic development, (Dorner, 2010), but quite the opposite, it develops greater cognitive plasticity, expository increased awareness control, better memory, and excellent problem-solving skills as well as an enhanced understanding of their primary language because young minds are ready to receive and learn new languages.

On the other hand, many parents prefer to enter their children in Immersive bilingual schools to encourage them and push them to learn new languages. Those parents believe that their native language is not at risk of being lost because it is spoken at home, in the community, and in the media (Cloud, N., Genesee. F., & Hamayan, E, 2000). They feel that allowing their children to learn a second language will benefit them in their future lives and careers (Calderon, M.E, & Minaya-Rowe, L, 2003). Parents and caregivers are encouraged to utilize the language in which they are most fluent and comfortable, and both languages are valued equally in supportive contexts for multilingual development.

### 1.9. Grounding Immersion Bilingual Education in Sharjah Schools

Learning is grounded in educational psychology and motivation. This study will specifically be informed by Self-Efficacy, Triadic Reciprocity (Bandura, 1989), and Jacquelynne Eccles's Expectancy-Value Theory (1983). These ideas describe how students acquire, develop, and retain information as they study. Comprehension of how understanding is obtained in maintaining information and abilities requires consideration of cognitive, emotional, and contextual effects, as well as past experience.

It is argued that developing literacy in two languages provides kids with not just linguistic but maybe also total cognitive benefits (Baker, 2006; Cummins, 2000; Garcia, 2009). The idea of self-efficacy, people's conviction in their capacity to undertake an activity, is a basic element of

social cognition theory (Bandura, 1977b). Self-efficacy theory focuses on how people and groups may be given a feeling of agency that will help them achieve their goals (Bandura, A. (1977b). Bilingual pupils should have the self-efficacy to be motivated and encouraged by their environment to succeed in their immersion bilingual route.

In Social Cognitive Theory, people's activation and maintenance of actions, cognitions, and feelings are systematically oriented toward the achievement of goals (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). In this theory, the focus is deeply highlighted on processes of learning and in doing so neglects biological tendencies that may influence behavior, regardless of past experiences and expectations. According to Bandura, two factors affect whether someone gets involved in a particular behavior or not: outcome expectancy and self-efficacy.

On the other hand, Bandura has determined three core components in his Triadic Reciprocity theory, He argued that individual personality is made up of three factors: Personality characteristics, behavior, and environment. As (Patrick et al, 2002) noted, research on motivation has typically omitted exceptional student populations, including students with identified behavioral and emotional disturbances. Children's subsequent task value is largely determined by their expectations for success. That is, youngsters, place a high value on domains in which they excel (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2001). According to the Expectancy-Value Theory, expectations for success and task value are shaped by a combination of factors. These include the characteristics of the kid (abilities, prior experiences, objectives, self-concepts, beliefs, expectations, and interpretations) as well as contextual factors (cultural milieu, socializers' ideas, and actions) are among them.

### 1.10. Research Questions

With such a cultural, population, and language diversity in the United Arab Emirates, the government has started to shift towards immersing the English language into the education program besides the Arabic language in schools. Therefore, this study seeks to explore bilingual language immersion programs for private schools in Sharjah. The research questions that this study seeks to address are as follows:

- Is reorienting from partial immersion language instruction to dual-language immersion instruction academically beneficial for students in Sharjah private schools?

- Do educators and academic administrators in Sharjah private schools have positive perceptions of dual-language immersion programs?
- Are dual-language immersion programs in Sharjah private schools beneficial for students' life improvement?

By addressing these questions, this study aims to highlight the perspectives of dual-language immersion education programs in Sharjah private schools, the importance of bilingualism, and the several benefits of learning more than one language alongside the need for Arabic as it is the official language of the UAE. Arabic is an integral part of the cultural identities of Arabs across 22 Arab states, and English language proficiency is a critical skill, as it has become the primary language of advanced education. Growing up with dual-language immersion gives children great cognitive awareness, as using a second language regularly makes their brains more flexible.

Furthermore, bilingualism helps children better interact with individuals outside their culture. It may improve their chances of practical and professional success, create new job opportunities, and open up opportunities for them to travel around the world and communicate with people from different cultures. The implementation of dual-language programs at private schools ensures that children acquire the second language in a manner equivalent to the skill of the first language. This study aims to reach the largest possible number of academics' opinions about this implementation to prove its necessity. This data will contribute to both the literatus and practice by providing pertinent insight into the potential ability and effectiveness of these programs. The research was specifically constructed following a review of the literature and the construction of the conceptual framework.

The following null and alternate hypotheses were formulated to support the research ideas, three hypotheses were put forward and examined:

Ho: Reorienting from partial immersion language instruction to dual-language immersion instruction among students in Sharjah private schools is not academically beneficial.

Ha: Reorienting from partial immersion language instruction to dual-language immersion instruction among students in Sharjah private schools is academically beneficial.

Ho: A relationship does not exist between or among educators and academic administrators in Sharjah private schools and positive perceptions of dual-language immersion programs.

Ha: A relationship exists between or among educators and academic administrators in Sharjah private schools and positive perceptions of dual-language immersion programs.

Ho: A relationship does not exist between or among the benefits of dual-language immersion programs and students' life improvement.

Ha: A relationship exists between or among the benefits of dual-language immersion programs and students' life improvement.

## 2. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative study. “Quantitative methods involve the processes of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study.” (Creswell, 2018, p.30). This quantitative exploratory study aimed to determine the benefits of implementing dual-language immersion programs in Sharjah private schools. Based on the review of the literature, a detailed questionnaire developed utilizing Google Forms software was developed with a demographic section and three main sections, namely desired benefits, educators' and academic administrators' perceptions, and desired benefits for students' future. For this study, the questionnaire was a series of thirty-nine-question that were measured on a 4-point Likert scale where each question has 4 multiple-choice arranges between strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree, to show the participants' opinions. Demographic factors examined included age, nationality, mother tongue language, highest educational level, number of spoken languages, school's curriculum, years of experience, and whether the school is private or governmental and located in Sharjah or not.

### 2.1. Data Collection and Surveying

The questionnaire was sent to teachers and academic administrators in Sharjah schools using a Google Forms link or QR Code for easy dispersal. All contacts fitting the criteria were asked to participate and to pass the questionnaire to their colleagues using a snowball method of disbursement to reach as many respondents as possible. All participants had the option to discontinue the questionnaire at any time. The questionnaire was voluntary for those who wanted to share their views whether they reject or support the research idea. Many teachers and academic administrators working in private schools located in Sharjah with varied curriculums were provided with questionnaires and 304 responses were collected and taken into consideration in this study.

### 2.3. Credibility and Trustworthiness

The questionnaire was introduced to the specialists at the American University of Ras Al Khaimah and in consultation with Master of Educational Leadership students to check and prove the content veracity of the questionnaire before publishing. All participations were kept confidential as the names and identifying information of the participants were not collected. Appropriate descriptive criteria were collected for the research and supported its credibility. Participants were asked about the location and type of the school they work for whether it is a governmental or ministerial school. The questions included in the questionnaire were also supported by questions related to the research such as the number of languages spoken by the participants, their nationality, mother tongue, age groups, years of experience, educational level, and the curriculum followed by the school in which they work to ensure that the participants' trustworthiness is guaranteed. A Cronbach's split alpha was applied to test reliability with an expected score of 0.80 or higher. The actual alpha score was 0.827 which matched the expected levels which means that the data have good reliability.

### 2.4. Limitations and Delimitations

The research was limited to a small geographic sample, and it started with making a questionnaire for a small sample of participants to include one emirate out of seven emirates in the UAE. The questionnaire was delimited to teachers and academic administrators only who work in the field of education in Sharjah private schools and access to multiple respondents was available. The questionnaire was given in English and Arabic to ensure that the questionnaire reaches the largest number of respondents, as there is an abundant diversity of different nationalities that live in the UAE.

### 3. Data Analysis

The responses provided in Table 1 represent the question category, number, mean, and standard deviation for all the nine demographic questions and these findings further illustrate the response patterns. Table 1 provides the category, number, percentage, mean, and standard deviation for these questions. This examination of the responses provides greater insight into the demographic responses of the questionnaire.

**Table 1**

*Distribution of Participants*

Question	Category	No.	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Q 1. Age Group</b>	20-30	60	19.7%	2.26	.888
	31-40	134	44.1%		
	41-50	80	26.3%		
	More than 51	30	9.9%		
<b>Q2. Nationality</b>	Arab Country	271	89.1%	1.22	.690
	American	11	3.6%		
	Indian	10	3.3%		
	Others	12	3.9%		
<b>Q3. Mother Tongue Language</b>	Arabic	276	90.8%	1.16	.546
	English	13	4.3%		
	Indian	10	3.3%		
	Others	5	1.6%		
<b>Q4. Highest Educational Level</b>	High School	13	4.3%	3.06	.830
	Institution, Two years after grade 12	34	11.2%		
	University Graduate	200	65.8%		
	Diploma	38	12.5%		
	Master's Degree	17	5.6%		
	PH. D	2	0.7%		
<b>Q5. Number of languages spoken excluding the mother tongue</b>	0	24	7.9%	2.29	.699
	1	188	61.8%		
	2	73	24%		
	More than 2	19	6.3%		

<b>Q6. School Curriculum</b>	Ministerial curriculum	225	74%	1.38	.739
	American curriculum	54	17.8%		
	British curriculum	14	4.6%		
	Others	11	3.6%		
<b>Q7. Location</b>	Sharjah	304	100%	1.00	.000
<b>Q8. Type of School</b>	Private	304	100%	1.00	.000
<b>Q9. Years of Experience</b>	1-5	69	22.7%	2.66	1.258
	6-10	69	22.7%		
	11-15	93	30.6%		
	16-20	41	13.5%		
	More than 21	32	10.5%		

Source: Survey Data Compiled Using SPSS

The survey was completed by 304 participants who answered all questions on the questionnaire. Questions were presented to teachers and academic administrators who were located in Sharjah and worked in private schools that follow ministerial (225), American (54), British (14), and other curriculums (11). Most participants were of Arabic heritage (271). The remaining participants were as follows: American (11), Indian (10), and others (12). The highest number of mother tongue languages was the Arabic language (276), then English (13), Indian (10), and others (5). The ages were varied, 20-30 years old (60), 31-40 years old (134), 41-50 years old (80), and more than 50 years old (30). The question of the number of languages spoken excluding the mother tongue language was maybe misinterpreted by some participants because there were (73) participants speak 2 languages, and (19) who speak more than two languages. Maybe they did not understand the question clearly that their mother tongue should be excluded because the percentage of speakers of more than one language was relatively high and illogical. Moreover, there were (24) participants who do not speak any other languages, and (188) who can speak one additional language.

Participants’ years of experience were well diverse, from 1-5 years (69), 6-10 years (69), 11-15 years (93), 16-20 years (41), and more than 21 years (32). Furthermore, the participants were well educated as (200) of them were university graduates, (38) were diploma holders, and (34) were holders of an intermediate institute certificate.

### Findings in Response to Research Question One

The study began with an examination of the exploratory questionnaire to answer Research Question One, which is looking at the perceptions of the benefits of reorienting from partial immersion language instruction to dual-language immersion instruction among students in Sharjah private schools. Table 2 provides the number, mean, standard deviation, and category for each of the first ten questions of the questionnaire. Each question was created to provide diverse responses between strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree, and these answers indicate the number of participants that agree or disagree with the questions asked. The reader should be aware that this analysis of the responses provides a great insight into the questionnaire responses and answers the first research question. These findings present the response patterns for questionnaire questions one through ten.

**Table 2**

*Distribution of Question Responses*

Question	Mean	Std. Deviation	No.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Communicating in two languages equally helps students gain interpersonal skills	2.20	.976	304	181	120	3	0
2. Learning by utilizing two languages equally helps students to think outside the box and in a creative way	1.98	.986	304	144	151	9	0



3. Mastering two languages equally enables students to know other cultures, civilizations, history, and traditions	2.09	.983	304	161	134	9	0
4. Equal mastery of two languages helps students become more receptive to the opinions of others	1.97	.980	304	141	150	13	0
5. Mastering two languages increases students' ability to understand and comprehend the subject matter	2.02	.983	304	150	143	11	0
6. Mastering two languages increases student intelligence and memory consolidation	2.18	.965	304	173	119	12	0
7. The student's mastery of two different languages enables the acquisition of new knowledge	1.98	.998	304	148	154	2	0
8. Mastering two languages enables students to make new friends	1.98	.997	304	148	153	3	0

9. Mastering two languages promotes the elimination of student’s feelings of shyness and isolation	1.97	.978	304	141	149	14	0
10. Dual-language immersion programs enhance students’ self-confidence and increase their academic achievements	2.02	1.006	304	151	148	3	2

Source: Survey Data Compiled Using SPSS

### Findings in Response to Research Question Two

To answer Research Question Two, the examination of the questionnaire exploratory was about looking at the perceptions of educators and academic administrators about implementing dual-language immersion programs in Sharjah private schools. Table 3 provides the number, mean, standard deviation, and category for each of the second ten questions of the questionnaire. These findings present the response patterns for questionnaire questions eleven through twenty.

**Table 3**

*Distribution of Question Responses*

Question	Mean	Std. Deviation	No.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. Students in the dual-language immersion program can read and write fluently using their second language	1.86	.972	304	125	167	12	0
12. Studying subjects in two languages helps	1.85	.974	304	121	170	12	1

students to achieve high proficiency in biliteracy and bilingual skills							
13. Students in the dual-language immersion program have a large gap in speaking abilities between the first language and the second language	1.94	.817	304	60	99	134	11
14. Students in the dual-language immersion program can express and talk fluently using the second language	1.66	.905	304	90	194	20	0
15. Teachers experience difficulty in communicating with students while using the second language	1.81	.768	304	42	116	138	8
16. Students can speak the second language fluently using what they have learned in the school curriculum	1.65	.854	304	73	181	49	1
17. Gaining two languages in the dual-language immersion program gives students greater self-esteem and a	1.98	.985	304	132	166	6	0

sense of accomplishment							
18. Difficulties are hindering the implementation of dual-language immersion programs at Sharjah private schools	1.73	.748	304	49	134	119	2
19. The implementation of dual-language immersion programs is considered better at an early age	1.63	.484	304	191	113	0	0
20. Students in the dual-language immersion program learn some core subjects in the second language to assist with the mastery of the language	1.71	.955	304	107	194	3	0

Source: Survey Data Compiled Using SPSS

### Findings in Response to Research Question Three

To answer Research Question Three, the examination of the questionnaire exploratory was about looking at the importance of students' dual-language immersion acquisition in Sharjah private schools regarding their future. Table 4 provides the number, mean, standard deviation, and category for each of the items in the third section of the questionnaire. These findings present the response patterns for questionnaire questions twenty-one through thirty.

**Table 4**

*Distribution of Question Responses*

Question	Mean	Std. Deviation	No.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. Speaking with equal fluency in two languages improves students' interaction with other cultures and the development of the community	2.06	.955	304	160	141	3	0
22. Speaking with equal fluency in two languages enables students to know how other communities think and live	1.96	.996	304	145	156	3	0
23. Fluency in two languages helps students to be successful in their future working life	2.19	.980	304	180	122	2	0
24. The student's mastery of Arabic and English languages makes the transition to university education easier	2.12	.993	304	169	134	1	0
25. The student's proficiency in two different languages	1.90	.995	304	133	166	4	0

enables learning additional languages							
26. The mastery of two different languages enables the individual to be more flexible in both personal and professional life	2.03	.994	304	155	145	4	0
27. Fluency in two languages will make job searching easier	2.19	.980	304	180	122	2	0
28. Students' proficiency in two languages makes traveling to other countries easier	2.19	.978	304	180	121	3	0
29. The student's mastery of two different languages promotes success in many areas of life	2.18	.976	304	176	122	6	0
30. Mastering two languages increases one's position in society	2.13	.994	304	165	131	6	2

Source: Survey Data Compiled Using SPSS

Exploratory factor analysis is a statistical technique used to reveal the underlying organization of a sizable collection of data (Norris, M. & Lecavalier, L, 2009). Out of the questionnaire's 30 factors that were categorized. In determining the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha for all scales used was conducted. Cronbach's alpha has a range of values between 0.00 and 1.00. A value of  $\geq 0.9$  is considered excellent.

In this study, the Cronbach alpha for questions that used a 4-point Likert scale was examined and reached .912 as shown below in Table 5, which is an excellent result.

**Table 5**

*Cronbach's Alpha*

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.912	30

*Source: Survey Data Compiled Using SPSS*

The findings of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are provided in Table 6. The table shows Bartlett's Test of Sphericity shows the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .896 indicating the data set's suitability for factor analysis. Relationships were found among the questionnaire responses for teachers and academic administrators in Sharjah private schools and the factors represented by the questionnaire hypotheses. An exploratory factor analysis was then conducted to examine the number of underlying factors driving participant answers.

**Table 6**

*Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test*

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.896
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3317.079
	df	435
	Sig.	<.000

*Source: Survey Data Compiled Using SPSS*

The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy surpassed 0.400 indicating the data set's appropriateness for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity revealed a significance of < 0.000. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected for the alternate hypothesis. Eight (8) factors were distinguished with Eigenvalues at or above 1.0, which asserts patterned correlations among the variables, in other words, there are strong relationships between the acquisition of dual-language immersion programs and the benefits of its implication on students at Sharjah schools.

The eight factors underlying participant responses accounted for 61.977% of the total variance in the data set. These eight factors shown in Table 7 below, advocate the questionnaire as actually measuring eight unique factors.

**Table 7**

Total Variance Explained

Total Variance Explained			
Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.589	28.629	28.629
2	2.199	7.329	35.958
3	1.775	5.918	41.876
4	1.450	4.833	46.709
5	1.325	4.418	51.126
6	1.164	3.879	55.005
7	1.080	3.600	58.606
8	1.011	3.371	61.977

Source: Survey Data Compiled Using SPSS

The rounded component matrix shown below will help in the process of factor reduction and data reduction, then proceed with the 'real' factor analysis technique. To further explore these eight factors, the factor loadings were inspected using the rotated component matrix as shown below in Table 8. It reduces the number of variables on which the variables under study have substantial loadings and enables identifying what each component stands for (Chetty, 2015). The rotated component matrix will provide the factor loadings for 30 questions. The rotation converged in 8 iterations.

**Table 8 Rotated Component Matrix**

Question	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Communicating in two languages equally helps	.217	.684*		.153	.110	.110		



students gain interpersonal skills								
2. Learning by utilizing two languages equally helps students to think outside the box and in a creative way	.210	.260		.667*	.113	.111		-.215
3. Mastering two languages equally enables students to know other cultures, civilizations, history, and traditions		.612*	.263	.317			.127	.115
4. Equal mastery of two languages helps students become more receptive to the opinions of others	.120	.243	.185	.660*	.115		.157	
5. Mastering two languages increases students' ability to understand and comprehend the subject matter		.678*	.242	.116		.209		
6. Mastering two languages increases student intelligence and memory consolidation	.154			.673*		.167		.233

7. The student's mastery of two different languages enables the acquisition of new knowledge	.141	.608*	.174	.153	.434			
8. Mastering two languages enables students to make new friends	.116	.127	.219	.539*	.505*	-.131		
9. Mastering two languages promotes the elimination of student's feelings of shyness and isolation	.375	.462	-.168	.146	.497	.142		-.139
10. Dual-language immersion programs enhance students' self-confidence and increase their academic achievements	.299			.482	.565*	.122		.118
11. Students in the dual-language immersion program can read and write fluently using their second language		.176	.274		.378	.319	.297	.238
12. Studying subjects in two languages		.180	.337	.172	.367	.291		.388

helps students to achieve high proficiency in biliteracy and bilingual skills								
13. Students in the dual-language immersion program have a large gap in speaking abilities between the first language and the second language			.151		.201	.153	.802*	
14. Students in the dual-language immersion program can express and talk fluently using the second language	.115		.337	.118	.456	.457	.101	
15. Teachers experience difficulty in communicating with students while using the second language	.111					.146	.737*	.312
16. Students can speak the second language fluently using what they have		.153				.729*		

learned in the school curriculum								
17. Gaining two languages in the dual-language immersion program gives students greater self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment	.289	.179			.609*		.159	.259
18. Difficulties are hindering the implementation of dual-language immersion programs at Sharjah private schools	.101					.706*	.363	-.160
19. The implementation of dual-language immersion programs is considered better at an early age	.259				.128		.139	.780*
20. Students in the dual-language immersion program learn some core subjects in the second language to assist with the	.186	.123	.255		.278	.426		.209

mastery of the language								
21. Speaking with equal fluency in two languages improves students' interaction with other cultures and the development of the community	.270	.278	.607*		.157		.275	
22. Speaking with equal fluency in two languages enables students to know how other communities think and live	.251		.768*	.170		.144		
23. Fluency in two languages helps students to be successful in their future working life	.599*	.241	.219	.103		-.108		.227
24. The student's mastery of Arabic and English languages makes the transition to university education easier	.307	.176	.651*	.125		.102		.183
25. The student's proficiency in two	.510*	.373	.308	-.112	.238			

different languages enables learning additional languages								
26. The mastery of two different languages enables the individual to be more flexible in both personal and professional life	.732*		.268	.204	.127			
27. Fluency in two languages will make job searching easier	.749*	.178	.153				.160	.119
28. Students' proficiency in two languages makes traveling to other countries easier	.615*		.346	.217		.156		.169
29. The student's mastery of two different languages promotes success in many areas of life	.762*	.147			.201		.139	
30. Mastering two languages increases one's position in society	.675*			.182	.153	.274	-.126	

Source: Survey Data Compiled Using SPSS

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

### **Overview of Factor 1**

The first component accounts for 28.629% of the Eigenvalues Variance in the sample data set which is the highest percentage. Teachers and academic administrators' perceptions of dual-language immersion are related to students' life improvement. Questions 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30 have significant factors in loadings. There are moderate-to-strong correlations in dual-language immersion that could help students to be successful in their future working life, learn additional languages, be more flexible in both personal and professional life, make job searching easier, travel to other countries easily, success in many areas of life, and increase one's position in society.

### **Overview of Factor 2**

The second component accounts for 7.329% of the Eigenvalues Variance. Teachers and academic administrators' perceptions of dual-language immersion are related to students' self-efficacy. Questions 1, 3, 5, and 7 have significant factors in loadings. There are moderate-to-strong correlations in dual-language immersion that could help students gain interpersonal skills, enable students to know other cultures, civilizations, history, and traditions, languages, increase students' ability to understand and comprehend the subject matter, and enable the acquisition of new knowledge.

### **Overview of Factor 3**

The third component accounts for 5.918% of the Eigenvalues Variance. Teachers and academic administrators' perceptions of dual-language immersion are related to community engagement and transition. Questions 21, 22, and 24 have significant factors in loadings. There are moderate-to-strong correlations in dual-language immersion that could improve students' interaction with other cultures and the development of the community, enable students to know how other communities think and live, and makes the transition to university education easier.

### **Overview of Factor 4**

The fourth component accounts for 4.833% of the Eigenvalues Variance. Teachers and academic administrators' perceptions of dual-language immersion are related to skills and intelligence development. Questions 2, 4, 6, and 8 have the heaviest factors in loadings. There are moderate-to-strong correlations in dual-language immersion that could help students to think outside the box and in a creative way, help them become more receptive to the opinions of

others, increase their intelligence and memory consolidation, and enable them to make new friends.

#### **Overview of Factor 5**

The fifth component accounts for 4.418% of the Eigenvalues Variance. Teachers and academic administrators' perceptions of dual-language immersion are related to academic achievements and personality enhancement. Questions 8, 10, and 17 have significant factors in loadings. There are moderate-to-strong correlations in dual-language immersion that it could enable students to make new friends, enhance students' self-confidence and increase their academic achievements, and give students greater self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment.

#### **Overview of Factor 6**

The sixth component accounts for 3.879% of the Eigenvalues Variance. Teachers and academic administrators' perceptions of dual-language immersion are related to community engagement and transition. Questions 16 and 18 have significant factors in loadings. There are moderate-to-strong correlations in dual-language immersion that it could help students speak the second language fluently using what they have learned in the school curriculum, but there may be difficulties hindering the implementation of dual-language immersion programs at Sharjah private schools.

#### **Overview of Factor 7**

The seventh component accounts for 3.600% of the Eigenvalues Variance. Teachers and academic administrators' perceptions of dual-language immersion are related to bridging learning gaps. Questions 13 and 15 have significant factors in loadings. There are moderate-to-strong correlations in private schools which not use the dual-language immersion program that students have a large gap in speaking abilities between the first language and the second language, and that teachers experience difficulty in communicating with students while using the second language.

#### **Overview of Factor 8**

The seventh component accounts for 3.371% of the Eigenvalues Variance. Teachers and academic administrators' perceptions of dual-language immersion are related to the importance of age in the learning process. Question 19 has a significant factor loading. The implementation of dual-language immersion programs could be considered better at an early age.



#### 4. Summary of Findings

An examination of the variable descriptive revealed that the findings of this study are related to eight factors that resulted from the participant responses and the research questions. The eight factors were: 1. students' life improvement, 2. students' self-efficacy, 3. community engagement and transition, 4. skills and intelligence development, 5. academic achievements and personality enhancement, 6. difficulties of dual-language immersion implementation, 7. bridging learning gaps, 8. the importance of age in the learning process. The analysis of factors loadings shows that the implementation of dual-language immersion programs is very beneficial and important to help socially, and academically. It helps to enhance self-confidence, develop community, and improve life in general. These factors show the teachers' knowledge of this importance, but in return, they find it difficult to implement.

#### 5. Discussion

This study has provided a comprehensive view of the benefits of implementing dual-language immersion programs. It also indicates the critical importance of this implementation on students' academic, professional, work, and future lives by surveying the opinions of well-experienced teachers and academic administrators. This study has provided a comprehensive view of the benefits of implementing bilingual immersion programs and their critical importance to students' academic, professional, work, and future lives by surveying the opinions of well-experienced teachers and academic administrators. It was found through the analysis of the factors that, despite all the clear support for the importance of these programs, they believe that it is difficult to be implemented. This study was conducted only on a small scale consisting of one emirate out of seven emirates, where this study was conducted on the emirate of Sharjah and the majority of the respondents in the questionnaire were of Arab nationality and there was not enough diversity in nationalities to gather more opinions, especially in a country with a large population diversity. The potential problem is that the Emirate of Sharjah has a large Arab population, and perhaps this was the reason for the majority of responses from Arab nationalities. Looking at the research literature, we find that the United Arab Emirates is trying hard to implement such programs due to its prediction of the importance of such programs in a promising educational future. Some may think that it is difficult to implement such programs,

but the successful experiences of previous countries in this field negate the expected difficulties and foretell the implementation of bilingual programs for cycle-one students.

## 6. Conclusion

The literature brings to light that early dual-language immersion programs have had a lot of success around the world, and they might be beneficial in the UAE. This study tried to reach the largest possible number of participants' opinions to prove its importance and necessity. This quantitative study aimed to collect relevant data from Sharjah schools, about teachers' and academic administrators' perspectives, to implement dual-language immersion programs among students in Sharjah private schools, and to identify their impression about the effect of these programs on students' academic educational path, personalities, acquisition, thinking, and intelligence. especially given the country's national and cultural variety. Creating the correct environment for children aids their language recognition and understanding, and it requires collaborative efforts from the surrounding environment to enhance multi-language learning for the benefit of students and to reflect on the environment. Bilingualism helps children better interact with individuals outside their culture. It may improve their chances of practical and professional success, create new job opportunities, and open up chances for them to travel around the world and communicate with people from different cultures. The implementation of dual-language programs at private schools ensures that children acquire the second language in a manner equivalent to the skill of the first language. As everyone is encouraged to learn more languages, the most important of which is English, which makes mastering it very important for the future of children. Although academics endorse the critical importance of these programs, which impact a student's academic, personal, and professional lives, many find them difficult to implement. But the reader should realize that this study was conducted on a small scale, and it is one out of the seven emirates of the UAE.

## 7. Recommendations for Future Research

This study aimed to expand and guide future research. It revealed the effectiveness and importance of dual-language immersion programs for students. Accordingly, the following recommendations are presented. 1. The scope of the research should be expanded from the Emirate of Sharjah only to include the seven emirates of the UAE to be more comprehensive. 2. The opinions of more teachers and academic administrators should be surveyed.

Therefore, the questionnaire should be distributed to many other nationalities. 3. Expand the research to schools that follow different educational curriculums. 4. Research more into the potential difficulties in the event of implementing these programs.

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