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Leveraging DL Parent's Knowledge: Parents as Partners in Waiting

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Research Question

- In what ways do parents understand dual language programs and their implications?

Abstract

This study explored the perspectives on dual language programs of parents of bilingual children. A survey was conducted to answer the following research question: In what ways do parents understand dual language programs and their implications? An open-ended survey was utilized as data collection via a Hispanic/ bilingual community center in the Midwest. Survey results provided insights into parental understandings about dual language. Among key findings of the research were the following: (a) 56% percent of the candidate children grew up learning 2 languages, (b) most of these children were introduced to a second language at the age of 3, and (c) over half of those surveyed consider their family bicultural. The level of parental involvement and understanding of a dual language program and how bilingual education works is critical to the effectiveness of an Early Childhood Dual Language Program in order to build a connection between a child and the parent as well as building a confidence in bilingual students to develop languages successfully.

Background

- Dual language programs encourage students to develop their native language alongside English.
- Native language use nurtures the only connection they may have to their parents, family, and roots.
- Dual language has a positive effect on a child's academics.
- Ideally such programs begin in early childhood and are sustained over several years.
- Demand for Dual Language programs in our communities is high, but many parents do not know how these programs work or are afraid that it will impede or slow their child's English development.
- Some parents may think Dual Language education may slow down a child's English development.

Methods

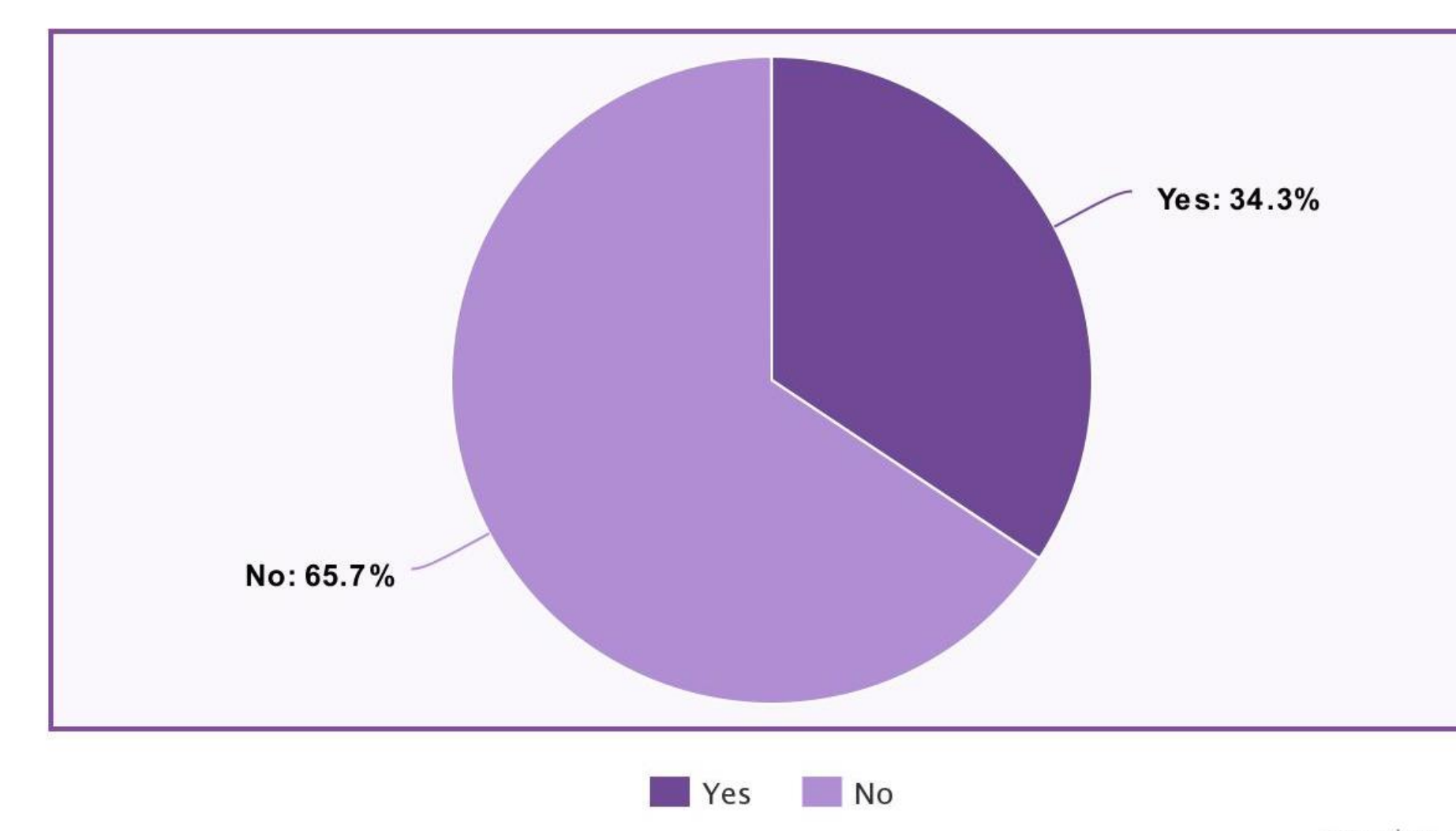
- A survey was conducted in a center in the Midwest that is developing a Dual Language program.
- The survey was through paper form and it provided information on the perspective of a parent who wants to enroll their child in a dual language program.
- The survey was for parents of students in this program prior to the program starting
- This survey included questions regarding:
 - Knowledge of Dual Language Education
 - Parent's perception of child
 - Child's Language
 - Culture and Identity
 - Fundamentals of knowledge

Hypothesis

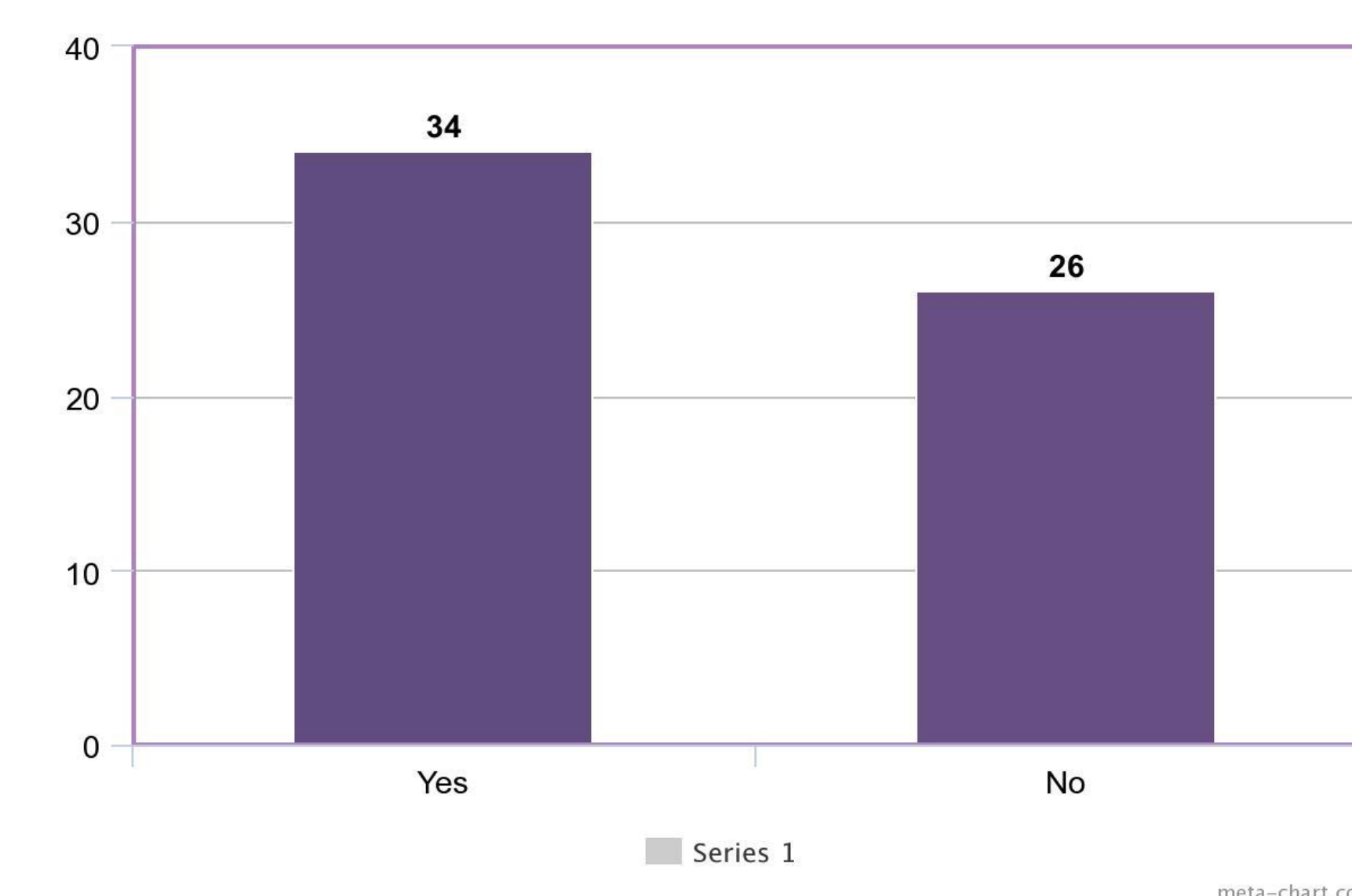
Parents do not have a clear understanding of what Dual Language programs are but know that they are good for their child's future.

Results

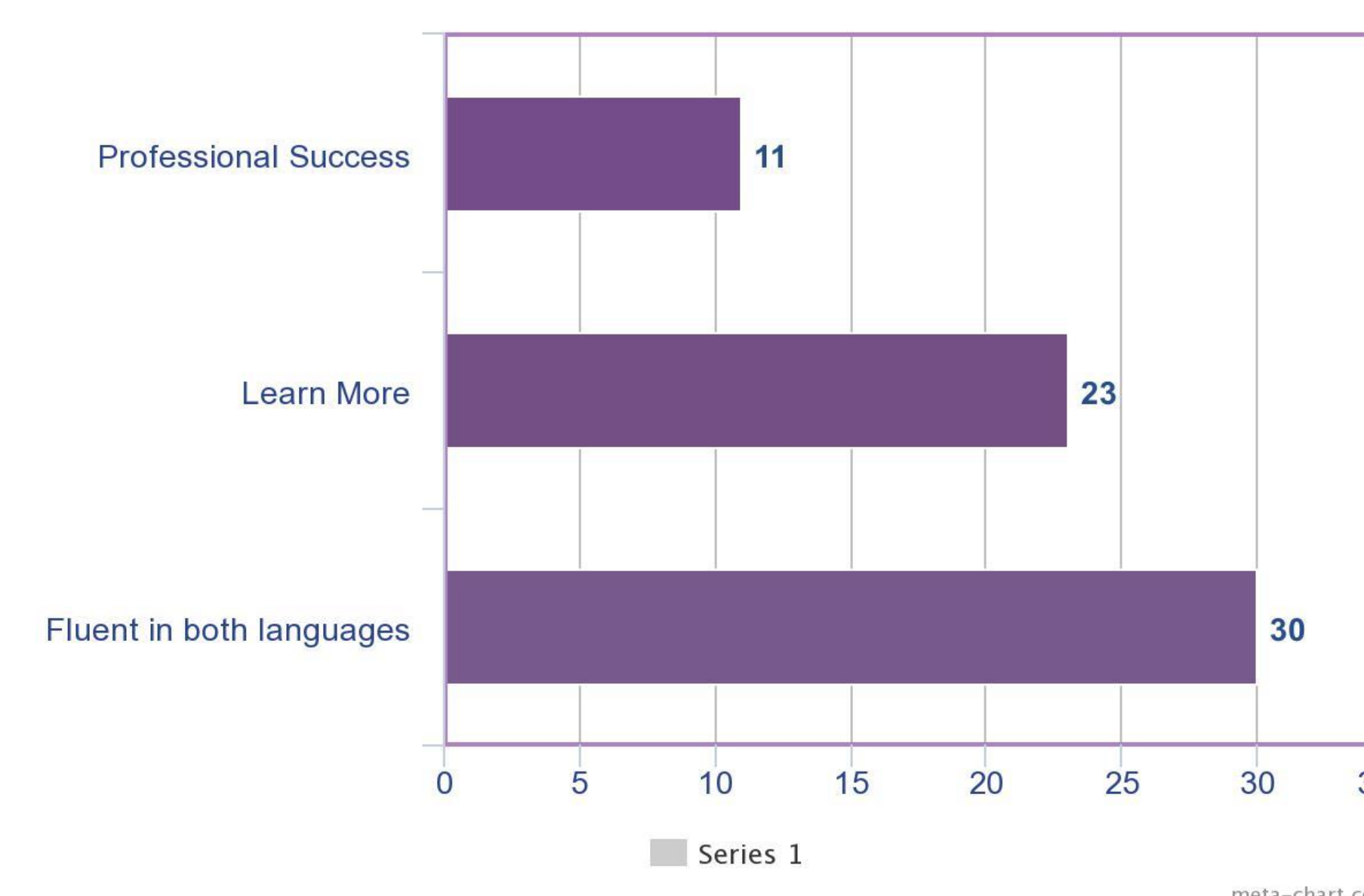
Does the parent understand what Dual Language is?



Did the child grow up learning both languages since birth?



Goals for Children



Average age second language was introduced:



Conclusion

Involvement of parents is essential in a child's education. For a bilingual student to be successful we, as parents, need to be educated in what dual language is and how it works. The learning does not stop when school ends it continues at home and through other life experiences, It is essential to know there is a difference between bilingual and monolingual learning. Through this survey done by parents we were able to see that Dual language is not thoroughly understood by parents. Therefore, we as parents, need to educate ourselves on dual language and become partners.