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PARENTAL PERSPECTIVES OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AMONG ENGLISH-SPEAKING CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE FAMILIES

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DISSERTATION

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, husband, and two children. My parents teach me to persevere in achieving my academic goals and to always be hopeful when I encounter challenges and difficulties. They have always taught me to be a kind and caring person. My husband always encourages me to achieve my academic and career goals with wholehearted support. My daughter and my son make me a mom with a determined mind to become their role model. I am so blessed to have you all in my life to make me a complete person. I also would like to dedicate my work to all the participants in this study. Without your participation, I would not have accomplished this research. Thank you!

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine (1) levels of parental involvement among parents from different ethnic groups, and (2) factors predicting parental involvement in their children's special education. A total of 112 parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds participated in the study. A survey study was conducted to investigate how marital status, parental education levels, income, perception about school climate, their belief of roles in parental involvement, and parental perception of self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school impacted the level of parental involvement in their children's home-based and school-based activities. The survey was sent out to the center directors of the non-profit organizations that supported families of children with disabilities. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to explore

to what extent the six factors predicted home-based and school-based involvement. The results indicated that marital status and parental education levels predicted parent involvement in general. Beliefs in roles and self-efficacy predicted combined home-based and school-based involvement. Parental education levels and beliefs in parents' roles to be involved in their children's education had impacts on home-based involvement.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research has found that parental involvement plays an important role in promoting children's high achievement in school levels (Bouffard & Weiss, 2008; Epstein, 2001a, 2001b; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2005; Pushor & Murphy, 2004; Underwood, 2010), and in improving children's learning behaviors (Domina, 2005). Parental involvement in children's education is also a strong positive factor influencing children's school behaviors (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Cotton & Wikelund, 1989; Ji & Koblinsky, 2009). Positive effects of parental involvement include greater academic success, such as a better grade point average and higher scores in reading and math (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Izzo et al., 1999; Weiss et al., 2010), greater motivation to learn (Griffith, 1998), reduced need for special education service hours (Miedel & Reynolds, 1999), and lower school dropout rates (Jimerson et al., 2000). Cotton and Wikelund (1989) further indicated that parental involvement benefits students of all ages in both general education and special education. A child's very first learning experiences occur at home and parents are their first teachers (Berclay, 1977; Taylor, 2004). What activities should parents be involved in? How should they be involved? These questions foster meaningful parental involvement.

Research indicates that parental involvement in their children's individualized education program (IEP) meetings and the transition planning process has numerous benefits for parents and their children with disabilities (Ju et al., 2018; Lasky & Karge, 2011; Wilson, 2015). These benefits include the development of positive relationships between parents and related professionals, and positive educational outcomes for students

with disabilities. Active parent involvement helps parents to adapt to their new roles as their children transition to post-secondary education and adulthood, has a positive impact on their children's post-education achievement, and leads their children with disabilities to have a more successful adulthood (Ju et al., 2018; Kim & Morningstar, 2005)

Parental involvement, defined and mandated under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB), empowers parents to be equal partners with teachers and other professionals in the decision-making processes of eligibility and educational placement (Lai & Ishiyama, 2004; Lasky & Karge, 2011). With the empowerment of IDEA, parents are a required member in their children's IEP meetings. Parents have the rights to make decisions on the placement of their children and provision related services to meet their children's individual education needs. School staff and other professionals have to take parents' opinions and concerns into account to the development of IEPs (IDEA, 2004). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) has taken parent involvement to another level (1) to engage not only parents but other family members to jointly develop the district plan and the family engagement policy, and (2) to jointly evaluate the content and effectiveness of developed family engagement policy to identify barriers to parents and family members' involving in Title I activities and needs of parents and family members to support their children's learning in both school-and home-based levels (Henderson, 2015). Parent involvement, thus, has an expansive definition with the inclusion of family members.

Historical Conceptual Frameworks of Parental Involvement

Research has described and classified different types of parental involvement. Some systems focus on what parents need to accomplish at school or at home; some

emphasize the development of parent education to foster parents' skills in effective involvement; and others highlight the collaboration of home, school and community (Bauch, 1994; Elbaum et al., 2016; Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Wang et al., 2016).

Gordon (1970, as cited in Bauch, 1994) identified and developed three models of parent involvement: the *Parent Impact Model,* which concentrated on how parents and home influence children's learning behavior; the *School Impact Model,* which addressed parent involvement activities such as parent/teacher collaboration projects or parent advisory committees; and the *Community Impact Model,* which referred to how home, school, and community influence children's education. Gordon stated that people and services should be brought together so that both learn and grow from the association and considered the *Community Impact Model* the "ultimate transactional view" (Gordon, 1970, as cited in Bauch, 1994, p. 53).

Wolfendale (1983) identified two paradigms of parental involvement: *parents-as-clients* and *parents-as-partners*. The *parents-as-clients* paradigm viewed parents as playing a passive, dependent, and deficit role in receiving the services, while the *parents-as-partners* paradigm considered parents as active and central contributors who share responsibility with professionals. In the *parents-as-clients* paradigm, parents were the recipients of the information, and were only temporarily involved in their children's education. The *parents-as-partners* paradigm had been based on home-school cooperation since the Education Amendments of 1980 was enacted (Wolfendale, 1983). In the *parents-as-partners* paradigm, parents were encouraged to play an active role in planning children's curriculum and learning, volunteer in their children's school, and support school activities (Wolfendale, 1983).

Gordon (1979, as cited in Bauch, 1994) and Shea and Bauer (1985, as cited in Lasky & Karge, 2011) adapted Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems framework for families of children with disabilities. Bronfenbrenner (1994) referred to ecological systems as the surrounding environments, which are the contexts for human development. He specified four nested contexts: microsystems, exosystems, mesosystems, and macrosystems. A microsystem was a set of activities, social roles, and relations with which a person interacts daily (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Gordon referred to this system as the interactions between the child and the family (Gordon, 1979, as cited in Bauch, 1994). Shea and Bauer adapted this concept to events that occur in an average household (Shea & Bauer, 1985, as cited in Lasky & Karge, 2011). An exosystem related to the connections and processes between two or more settings, at least one of which indirectly influences the developing child and interacts to affect the child's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Gordon defined this concept as the place where local policies can be examined (Gordon, 1979 as cited in Bauch, 1994) while Shea and Bauer referred to it as a larger social system in which the family functions (Shea & Bauer, 1985 as cited in Lasky & Karge, 2011). A mesosystem described the linkages and processes between two or more settings directly influencing the child's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Gordon viewed this system as including neighborhood places and activities (Gordon, 1979, as cited in Bauch, 1994). On the other hand, Shea and Bauer considered it as mutual interactions of these settings (Shea & Bauer, 1985, as cited in Lasky & Karge, 2011). A macrosystem consisted of patterns and characteristics of micro-, exo- and meso-systems under a culture or a subculture. It can be viewed as "a societal blueprint for a particular culture or subculture" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 1645). Gordon described this

system as the major social, economic, and political issues affecting children and families (Gordon, 1979, as cited in Bauch, 1994). Shea and Bauer interpreted this system, which was comprised of cultural beliefs and values, as the one that influences the three other systems and eventually influences the parents' level of involvement in their children's education (Shea & Bauer, 1985, as cited in Lasky & Karge, 2011).

Bronfenbrenner (2001, as cited in Tudge et al., 2016) revised the ecological theoretical system as the bioecological model. Four properties were defined in this model. The first, also the core of this model, was *process.* Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) specifically explained a particular form of process, *proximal processes,* as the interactions between an individual and the surrounding environments over time which was the primary mechanisms to produce human development. The examples of proximal processes were parents playing with their young children, a child playing with another child at home or at school, in addition to teacher and child interactions. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) further specified that *proximal processes* must include the interactions with objects and symbols existing in the immediate environment that drew individuals' "attention, exploration, manipulation, elaboration, and imagination" (p. 798).

The second component was *person*. A person's development of characteristics was influenced by the *proximal processes* (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). These characteristics were brought into the social situations where individuals were situated (Tudge et al., 2009). Three types of characteristics were classified: *forces or dispositions, resources, and demand*. Dispositions were served as the driving forces to keep proximal processes functioning and sustaining in a particular developmental domain (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Generative forces could initiate and sustain the

proximal processes while disruptive forces could interrupt these processes (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). Resources related to an individual's "ability, experiences, knowledge, and skills" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 796) to effectively engage in the proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Rosa & Tudge, 2013; Tudge et al., 2009). Demand could "invite or discourage from the reactions of social environment that can foster or disrupt the operation of proximal processes" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 796). Demand consisted of the qualities such as types of temperaments, a person's appearance, age, gender, skin color, and all the qualities that could influence the implementation of proximal processes (Rosa & Tudge, 2013).

The third component was *context*. Context referred to the four systems, micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-systems. The last component was time at three successive levels: *microtime*, *mesotime,* and *macrotime*. Microtime was "continuity versus discontinuity in ongoing episodes of proximal process" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 796). Mesotime referred to the frequency of the episodes occurred over time. Macrotime "focused on the changing expectations and events in the larger society both with and across generations" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p. 796). Based on these components, Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) defined human development as "the phenomenon of continuity and change in the biopsychological characteristics of human beings, both as individuals and as groups. The phenomenon extends over the life course…" (p. 793).

Bourdieu (1986) discussed three forms of capital: economic, social, and cultural capital. The term *capital* is usually considered to be associated with economic activities that involve exchange for profit (Reay, 2004). Bourdieu's (1986) concept of social capital

is that it is "made up of social obligations (connections), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility" (p. 243). Coleman (1988) further elaborated Bourdieu's work and focused on the role of social capital in students' educational achievement. Coleman (1988) defined social capital as the aspect of social structures that facilitate certain actions that people perform within the structure. Social capital is inherent in the relations among people under social contexts and structures. It focuses on the reciprocal beneficial interactions between people. The social capital of family is the relation and interaction between parents and children (Coleman, 1988). Social capital within a family, such as parents monitoring children's homework and discussing goals with children, can help children to attain higher academic achievement (Wang, 2008). Immigrant parents with a nonmainstream cultural background often encounter difficulties in communicating with schools and other parents or with helping their children with their homework (Harry, 2008). Wang (2008) employed the social capital theory to investigate parent-school relations of Chinese immigrant parents in the United States that affected their participation in their children's special education. Wang (2008) reported that the relations between Chinese immigrant parents and the U.S. teachers stayed at a business-to-business level. In addition, Wang (2008) concluded that language barriers, time conflicts with the parents' work schedule, cultural barriers, and different expectations of education between teachers and parents were the primary intervening factors that influenced Chinese immigrant parents' levels of participation.

Bourdieu (1986) defined cultural capital as "convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational

qualifications" (p. 243). Bourdieu's concern about cultural capital is its impact on social inequality. Bourdieu further discussed the reasons behind unequal academic achievement of children including reasons that originate from the different social classes that families are from (Bourdieu, 1986). Families from middle-class backgrounds have better understanding of the educational system and greater resources to support their children in learning. Reay (2004) examined the application of the cultural capital theory in research related to parent involvement from families of different social classes. Reay (2004) indicated that parents' educational experiences and social status influence their involvement in their children's education and that such differences are powerfully rooted in cultural capital. Middle-class parents are able to provide more educational resources to participate in their children's education for higher academic achievement than are working-class parents. Reay (2004) was concerned that the policies that emphasize parent involvement in education potentially maximize the social inequalities in education.

Epstein first proposed five functional types of parental involvement and later included a sixth type (Eptein, 1987, as cited in Bauch, 1994). These six types of parental involvement were (a) basic family obligations such as parenting skills, (b) basic school obligations such as communication with teachers, (c) involvement in school activities such as volunteering at school, (d) involvement in learning activities at home, (e) involvement in governance and advisory, and (f) involvement in community agencies.

Epstein et al. (1997) specified that parental involvement included characteristic interactions between parents and schools. Epstein et al. (1997) referred to these interactions as *spheres of influence*. They further classified two different types of spheres

of influence as *separate spheres of influence* and *overlapping spheres of influence*. Stein and Thorkildsen (1999) then elaborated on the separate spheres theory:

> In some schools, there are still educators who say, 'if the family would just do its job, we could do our job.' And there are still families who say, 'I raised this child; now it's your job to educate her.' (p. 3)

These words exemplify the theory of separate spheres of influence in which educators and parents do not have a common goal in education. Stein and Thorkildsen (1999) described the overlapping spheres theory as:

> Other educators say, 'I cannot do my job without the help from my students' families and the support of this community.' And some parents say, 'I really need to know what is happening in school in order to help my child. (p. 3)

These words embody the theory of overlapping spheres of influence in which educators and parents share the responsibility of education (Stein & Thorkildsen, 1999).

Epstein (2001b) proposed six types of parental involvement including the following elements: parenting, communicating, volunteering, at-home learning, decision making, and collaborating. In a broad sense, Epstein (2001b) defined parenting as the set of skills that become apparent in a home environment and that supports education. Communicating is the open and mutual communication tunnel for both parents and schools. Volunteering involves parents giving their time and energy to school activities. At-home learning describes parents carrying out school activities at home. Decision making refers to parents' guidance on parent advisory committees in decision making in matters related to their children's education. Finally, collaborating means that schools pull resources with the local community for the betterment of schools as well as of

families. This framework describes the partnership between families, schools, and communities. Epstein and Sanders (2002) re-emphasized these six different types of parental involvement activities and encouraged schools to provide meaningful partnerships with families and communities. Parent involvement consisted of two elements: home-based and school-based involvement (Wang et al., 2016). Home-based involvement related to parental involvement in learning activities at home while school-based involvement referred to parental involvement in school-based activities.

The family systems theory provides a framework for professionals to "understand what a family is and how it functions" (Minuchin, 1974, as cited in Taylor, 2004, p. 1). It also provides a framework for professionals to establish better collaboration with families (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1986). The family systems theory views the family as a unique social system with characteristics where interaction occurs between family members and the child with disabilities (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1986). Turnbull and Turnbull (1986) suggested four major components of the framework: family resources, family interaction, family functions, and the family life cycle. Family resources are the descriptive elements of a family, which include characteristics of a family, characteristics of the disability, and characteristics of each family member. Family interaction describes the relationships between family members. Family functions focus on the needs to be fulfilled to help families function well. The family life cycle refers to the changes occurring in the family that further influence the family interaction. An understanding of family resources, interaction, functions, and life cycle is essential for developing meaningfully individualized parent-professional relationships.

Turnbull and Turnbull (1996) specified three assumptions central to family systems theory: "(a) the input/output configuration of the system, (b) the concept of wholeness and subsystem, and (c) the role of boundaries in defining system" (as cited in Taylor, 2004, p. 2). The first assumption describes how family characteristics (input) influence family function (output). The second assumption refers to the importance of viewing the family as a whole instead of examining the components within the family. The third assumption addresses the differences of boundaries defined by the professionals and families. The premise of professionals understanding the unique characteristics and dynamics of each family is prominent when professionals work with families of children with disabilities (Taylor, 2004).

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model (2006), Bourdieu's capital theory (1986), and Minuchin's family system theory (1974) focused on the surrounding environment including family characteristics and its interactions with individual and their family on the way to influence human development.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997, 2005) developed a theoretical model of parent involvement, which examined specific predictors influencing the level of parental involvement in their children's education. This model consisted of three categories of motivational variables which influenced parents' level of involvement in education: parents' motivational beliefs, parents' perceptions of invitations from others, and family/life context variables. Parents' motivational beliefs included parent activity beliefs and parent efficacy. The former referred to parents' beliefs in themselves as a helping role in their children's education. The latter related to parents' perceptions of their capacities to support their children to succeed in education (Fishman & Nickerson,

2015; Green et al., 2007). Parents' perceptions of invitation from others encompassed three categories: perceptions of general school invitations to involvement, perceptions of specific teacher invitations to involvement, and perceptions of specific child invitations to involvement. This variable included parents' perceptions of invitations from the school, teachers, and individual child to be involved in their children's education (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Green et al., 2007). Parents' perceptions of life context consisted of two categories: skills and knowledge as well as time and energy. This variable included parents' perceptions of their own skills and knowledge relevant to involvement in their children's education in addition to the demand of their time in family needs that might influence their level of involvement. Thus, researchers began to apply this model to their research to further examine this model (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Green et al., 2007). Several researchers focused on investigating the level of parental involvement in general which included families of children with and without disabilities (Green et al., 2007; Griffith, 1998; Smith et al., 1997; Waanders et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2016). Some researchers specifically explored the potential variables influencing the level of involvement from parents of children with disabilities (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015). However, little research was conducted to test this model with parents of children with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Legal Conceptual Frameworks of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement and its influence on children's achievement and school reform has been a part of federal, state, and local policy for over thirty years (Mapp, 2012). Several federal laws have underscored the idea and the implementation of parent

involvement. The Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) was reauthorized and codified as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990, and was amended in 1997 and again in 2004 (Kalyanpur et al., 2000; Taylor, 2004). Though IDEA initially promoted parental involvement in special education in 1990, the specific definition of parental involvement was first specified in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2002.

NCLB (2002) defined parent involvement as "the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities and ensuring that (a) parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; (b) parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; (c) parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and (d) other activities are carried out such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA" (Section 9101(32)). The principles of NCLB are accountability, flexibility, scientifically based research, and parent options (National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education [NCPIE], 2007). The Act gives parents the power to send their children to another school if their school is identified as being in need of improvement. In addition, schools are required to use multiple means to reach out to parents to eliminate the communication barriers and the major challenges. Schools are required to develop written policies and school-parent compacts in addition to deliver report cards to inform parents of their children's performance. The state education agency must oversee the schools' Title I programs to ensure they carry out the law (Henderson, 2002).

Parent involvement is not defined specifically within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004). However, the 2004 reauthorization of the IDEA stated its support of active parent involvement as "…strengthening the role and responsibility of parents and ensuring that families … have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home" (Section 601(c)(5)). This recent version of IDEA clearly identified "parent organizations" and "parent training and information centers" as major means to increase greater parent involvement.

Turnbull et al. (2007) indicated that the IDEA empowers parents to request an initial evaluation, a reevaluation, and services provided for their children. Similarly, local education agencies (LEAs) must obtain parental consent in order to conduct the assessments and provide services (34 CFR §300.300). Parents have the right to participate in meetings in regard to evaluation, identification, educational placement, and the provision of a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to their child (34 CFR §300.501(b)). Parents can send their children to a private school which meets their children's needs if the IEP team determines that the private school is an appropriate placement. LEAs are required to pay the tuition for the children. In addition, parents are a required member of any team to decide their child's disability and eligibility for special education and related services (34 CFR §300.306(a)(1)), to develop, review, and revise the IEP for their child (34 CFR §300.321(a)(1)), make placement decisions for their child (34 CFR §300.501(c)), and have the opportunity to inspect and review all education records (34 CFR §300.501(a)). Parents also are entitled to file a due process complaint if school districts fail to provide the evaluation and the needed services to their children (34 CFR §300.504). Moreover, parents with children with disabilities must be included in the

State IDEA advisory panel providing policy guidance in regard to special education and related services (34 CFR §300.168).

The 2004 amendments reinforced the collaboration between parents and LEAs, and allow parents and LEAs to agree that

> (a) a reevaluation may occur more often than once a year or if they waived the requirement of an evaluation at the 3-year mark, (b) an IEP team member may be excused from an IEP meeting if the member's area of curriculum or related service is not going to be modified or discussed at the meeting, (c) the parents' consent must be in writing, (d) changes to an existing IEP may be made without convening an IEP team meeting, (e) alternative means of parent participation are acceptable, such as video conferences and conference calls. (Turnbull et al., 2007, p. 307-308)

Part B of IDEA 2004 established rights for students with disabilities aged 3 to 21 and their parents. Notably, Part C, related to infants and toddlers with disabilities, gives parents more responsibilities and rights than Part B does. Part C provides that parents may request early intervention services in the home or at a public facility as well as reject unwanted services (Turnbull et al., 2007). Part C also emphasizes family-centered assessment and service plans. The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) provides not only the developmental services but acknowledges the importance of meaningful parent-professional partnership (Family Empowerment and Disability Council [FEDC], 2012; Turnbull et al., 2007).

The terms "parent involvement" and "family engagement" are used interchangeably in the policy initiatives and research articles (Underwood, 2010).

Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy of New York introduced the Family Engagement in Education Act in 2010 to serve the purpose of "strengthening family engagement in education of their children" (Congress, 2010). Later in 2013, the Family Engagement in Education Act was amended to serve the purpose of "increasing student success and foster school improvement by strengthening families' engagement in the education of their children" (Congress, 2013). This Act acknowledged the importance of family engagement and specified the positive benefits for children, youth, families, and schools. Additionally, it mandated each state to establish a statewide family engagement center and at least one local family engagement center in order to provide training and technical assistance for families to engage in their children's education effectively. Parents have the right to participate in any of the training programs freely, and no center or institute may infringe parents' rights if parents are unable to attend the training. The schools have the responsibility to provide means for parents to better assist their children in learning and engage family members in developing the recommendations of family engagement policies and practices in addition to assessing the policies and practices.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) served as the latest authorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). ESSA broadens the aspect of parent engagement to include parents and all family members as family engagement. Schools must make efforts to outreach all parents and family members, to encourage parents and all family members to be involved in development of the district plan, family engagement policy, and implementation, as well as, evaluation of family engagement program and policy (Henderson, 2015). Furthermore, local education agencies shall use funds to carry out activities and strategies consistent with jointly developed family engagement policy such

as providing professional development to school staff and teachers, collaborating with community organizations, and so on (Henderson, 2015).

Cultural Conceptual Framework of Parent Involvement

The United States is a nation of many cultures. The number of families from CLD backgrounds is increasing (Taylor, 2004). A growing number of research studies have focused on the investigation of factors affecting the level of involvement of parents from CLD backgrounds (Jung, 2011). The deficit thinking theory, also known as the deficit views, and the capital theory were employed to examine these barriers.

In the 1960s, dominant theories offered negative views of working-class family environments through deficit theories of ethnic cultures. The assumption of the *tangle of pathology* was that "culturally deprived" and "socially disadvantaged" parents do not value education for their children (Harry, 1992). In much of the literature on parent involvement that explored the issues of racial inequality, race and ethnicity were treated as factors that contributed to negative beliefs of CLD parents' incapacity of participating in their children's education (Baquedano-López et al., 2013).

Parenting standards and styles were measured based on the White and middle-class families' culture (Harry, 1992). Teachers and related service providers often discounted immigrant parents' opinions relevant to traditional culture and beliefs during the IEP meetings which might be a result of a lack of mutual understanding (Kalyanpur et al., 2000). Harry (2008) indicated that a majority of educators deemed that any barriers to effective involvement of parents from CLD backgrounds and misunderstanding of the cultural interpretation of disability were the results of deficits of families. Lasky and Karge (2011) described educators' deficit views that "influential negative perceptions are

often based on the family economic level, marital status, educational level, and assumptions about family dysfunction" (p. 31). Jung (2011) further indicated that these educators' deficit views, which cause barriers to family engagement, include the educators' stereotypes of family cultures, their denial of parent expertise and knowledge about the child, and their lack of awareness and sensitivity to family traditions and religious beliefs. The conceptual discrepancy between involvement of parents from CLD backgrounds in their children's special education and the ideal of equality mandated by law still exists. As a result, many parents from CLD backgrounds are unable to participate meaningfully in their children's special education (Jung, 2011).

Trends

Beginning in the 1980s, the focus of parental involvement shifted to parent education (Berger, 1991). Parent education programs aimed to help parents develop better parenting skills (Rafferty & Griffin, 2010), prepare their children for school (Gordon, 1970), develop a cooperative partnership between schools and parents (Berclay, 1997), and prepare parents to volunteer in their children's classrooms (Berclay, 1997). Since the blooming of the parent education movement, content areas of parent education programs were broadened to include gaining child care skills and learning how to promote children's play skills, understanding children's behavior at home and school, recognizing children's emotional well-being and personality development, as well as preparing a better home environment for their children (Cataldo, 1987). It is the parents who best know and understand their children. Their beliefs about their children's education are developed mostly from the personal, community, and cultural contexts in which they were reared (Mulick & Butter, 2002). After parents gain the skills to become

more involved in education, they want to apply the concepts of children's education that they have learned from the parent education program to their parenting.

Historical Trends of Parent Involvement

From the days of the early Egyptian, Sumerian, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman societies, parent involvement in children's education was apparent (Berger, 1991). Children's education was mainly the responsibility of the family. During the Middle Ages, when a child from a noble family was seven years old, the youngster was sent to live in another noble's home. Children were viewed and treated as miniature adults. The concept of family did not begin to develop until the 15th to 17th centuries (Berger, 1991). The first advice book that emphasized teaching children to speak was printed in the 16th century, and the first book that advised parents about the teaching of letters and behaviors was printed in the 17th century. The publication of these two books led to an emphasis on strict discipline in the education of children (Cataldo, 1987).

Before the writing of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel in the 18th and early 19th centuries, strict discipline was employed on all classes of children. After their writings were released, a sense of humanism was brought to the rearing of children (Berger, 1991). In the 1800s, Locke and Rousseau's argument for work schools and children's freedom, Pestalozzi's notion of parental role in nourishing a child's body and mind, and Froebel's curriculum of playing as an essential means of real learning launched the kindergarten and child study movement (Cataldo, 1987). The first parent magazines and books were printed in 1820 because of get-togethers of parent groups and the establishment of mother study groups. These groups were supported by organizations

such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Child Study Association (Berger, 1991).

The modern parent education movement can be traced to the 1880s and 1890s. The National Congress of Mothers (PTA), the Child Study Association, and the American Association of University Women were founded during that era (Berger, 1991). Child-rearing programs were a focus in each of the organizations. Charitable organizations provided parent education in their settlement schools as well as free kindergarten programs (Berger. 1991). By the 1920s, parent education programs were well established, and child-rearing practices emphasized character, strict discipline, and mental health (Cataldo, 1987).

In 1909, the First White House Conference on Care of Dependent Children was held. Consequently, the Children's Bureau was established in 1912. In the 1920s, a total of 26 parent education programs was developed, and many parent groups were founded across the country (Berger. 1991). Since the 1930s, programs have focused on methods for improving relationships between family members and children, children's behaviors, and children's personality development. Group methods of teaching parents became synonymous with parent education during this time (Berger, 1991).

Between 1880 and 1930, the eugenics movement greatly influenced the view that parents are the source of their child's disability (Turnbull & Turbnbull, 1986). The purpose of the eugenics movement was to improve the quality of the family through birth control and selective breeding. The movement contributed to the notion that "heredity is the cause of mental retardation" (Turnbull & Turnbull., 1986, p. 2). As a result, individuals with intellectual disability were restricted from marriage and were sterilized.

Furthermore, the number of persons with intellectual disability institutionalized increased sharply from 9,334 in 1900 to 68,035 in 1930 (Turnbull & Turnbull., 1986). The policies and standards of institutions and hospitals further reinforced the notion of the negative influence passed by parents to their children. In Turnbull and Turnbull's (1985) edited book, *Parents Speak Out: Then and Now*, Dorothy Avis stated:

> [p]ractices within institutions seemed to separate parents from their children. Visiting hours were limited, and sometimes visits were supervised. Permissions were required. It is not too hard to interpret that the child needs protection from the parents--or the reverse." (p. 173)

Hence, parents were not able to be directly involved in the education of their children with intellectual disability.

In the 1940s and 1950s, parents of children with autism, asthma, and emotional disturbance were blamed for their maladaptive personality traits and child-rearing practices (Turnbull & Turnbull., 1986). A leading professional, Dr. Bruno Bettleheim, even proposed that institutionalizing children with autism and replacing parents with institutional staff and professionals was a more caring and competent child-rearing strategy (Turnbull & Turnbull., 1986). In the meantime, because of other social events, the parent education programs maintained the goal of providing information to parents to assist them with child-caring skills (Cataldo, 1987).

In the 1950s, Freud and Erickson published writings on the social and emotional growth of children, and Spock wrote his famous child-care book: *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* (Cataldo, 1987). These writings shifted the focus on the concern for children's mental health (Berger, 1991). The deinstitutionalization movement

arose at the same time. Parent organizations from all areas of exceptionality, particularly the National Association for Retarded Children (NARC), published policies and urged the government to establish laws for the right of children with disabilities to an education in a public school or his/her home (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1986). Elizabeth Boggs, the founder and president of NARC, described her reaction of institutionalization for her son, a child with severe intellectual disability, in *Parents Speak Out: Then and Now* as,

> I try to think of how the world must look from his point of view, and what kind of an environment would not only minimize his boredom and loneliness but enhance his sense of dominance. When I try to put myself into his skin, I realize that he, like me, has an immediate environment, a home, that is, the place where he sleeps, eats, and spends his leisure time with certain associates. (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1986, p. 62)

Parents of children with disabilities requested the rights for their children with disabilities to receive education in a public school or at home.

In the 1960s and 1970s, after Piaget's work was translated into English, an emphasis was placed on cognitive development. The concept of the total child (emotional, social, intellectual, and physical) then was established and became the focus of many professionals (Berger, 1991). The First White House Conference on Families was held in 1980; it declared that parent involvement was an important element in a child's success (Berger, 1991). More parents then demanded involvement in their children's education (Stein & Thorkildsen, 1999). In the meantime, the early intervention movement stimulated professional interest and activity in the role of the parent (Cataldo, 1987). During this period, programs were developed that placed a focus on young

children and on ways to reduce the disadvantages faced by children from low-income families. Another goal for these programs was to help families to understand how to support their children's growth and developmental progress (Cataldo, 1987).

> An advocacy landmark occurred in the late 1960s when parents of students with mild to severe mental retardation, in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children, sued the state to obtain a free appropriate education for all children with disabilities. (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1986, p. 15)

Parent organizations cooperated with parents who were not organization members and with professionals, particularly with the Council for Exceptional Children, to request federal legislation mandating a provision of a free, appropriate education to include all students with disabilities (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1986). The Education of the Handicapped Act in 1970, an amendment in 1973, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, and two amendments were the result of parent-advocacy initiatives led by professionals and parent organizations.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the focus of intervention programs shifted to "high risk for developmental difficulties" (p. 6) and expanded the intervention program to preschool children from low-income and minority families (Cataldo, 1987). Infants and toddlers began to receive greater attention for interventions. Program staff began to incorporate parents' perspectives, difficulties, and abilities into the design of the intervention programs employed in the home settings.

Legal Trends of Parent Involvement

In 1968, the importance of parent involvement was explicitly stated in regulations of the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) Title I. These regulations empowered parents to

monitor their children's schools. By achieving this goal, the option of establishing parent advisory councils (PACs) was given to the school districts (Mizell, 1980). In the meantime, the parent participation movement started to bloom in special education. In 1968, the Early Childhood Assistance Act introduced by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) mandated family engagement as a requirement for funding projects. This act fostered more than 200 early education programs in the United States (Harry, 1992).

In 1969, the General Education Provision Act (GEPA) empowered the Commission of Education to fortify parent involvement language. In 1972, the USOE mandated each local education agency (LEA) establish a PAC in the district. As a result, the advocacy organizations boosted efforts to encourage greater parental involvement in the accountability of schools as well as in the districts for the money contributed by Title I. For example, organizations such as the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) had been working for years on segregation issues in the southern states. It established the Southeastern Public Education Program (SEPEP) to collaborate with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense Fund (Mizell, 1980). The objectives of SEPEP were to provide to the community and citizens the information related to parental involvement, leadership development, and legal assistance; collaborate with federal agencies to ensure accountability in serving their community; and warn the federal government of the difficulties of the implementation of the regulations. In addition, SEPEP had been working on the election of PACs in their serving district and building the parents' competence to understand the law and oversee

the schools and districts implementing the Title I parent involvement mandates (Mizell, 1980).

A Title I chairman and activist, William H. Anderson, worked closely with the staff in the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund to train and organize the Title I parents. In 1972, Anderson made arrangements for 14 parents to attend a meeting called by the National Advisory Council for Education of Disadvantaged Children (NACEDC) to request sponsorship of a national conference for Title I parents. NACEDC agreed. The conference was held the following year and resulted in the establishment of the National Coalition of ESEA Title I Parents, which focused on building the capacity of Title I parents to become more involved in their children's education (Witherspoon, 1996).

In 1973, Public Law 93-380, also known as Education Amendments of 1974, stated that PACs were required for each district and school served by Title I (Fege, 2006). Parents had the power to elect the members and be the majority of the members (Fege, 2006). In 1976, the Carnegie Corporation provided an award to the National Coalition to establish the National Parent Center (NPC). The purpose of NPC was to provide training, information, resources, and assistance to parents as well as to schools and districts (National Coalition of ESEA Title I Parents, 2011). In 1975, Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA), required schools to obtain parental permission for the evaluation and educational placement of their children with disabilities in addition to parental agreement on developing the IEPs (Harry, 1992).

The educational amendments of 1978 required Title I schools to provide services to engage parents in education. Several aspects were emphasized. The first aspect was to

provide parents information about Title I progress and their children's progress, to involve parents in governance, and to establish programs. The second aspect was to establish school advisory councils with the majority of Title I parents as members and to include parents of students eligible for the program but not participating. The third aspect was to permit school advisory councils to refuse the school district's plan for the use of Title I funds. School districts, in collaboration with the advisory councils, should work on planning, implementation as well as evaluation of programs, and provisions for training of council members (Fege, 2006).

The 1978 amendment was the most comprehensive and far-reaching regulation. However, administrators and some members of Congress considered the parent involvement requirements as too prescriptive. Title I parent involvement requirements began to decrease over the next eight years (Fege, 2006).

In 1981, Title I became Chapter I under the Reagan administration when ESEA was replaced by the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act. The requirement was reduced to a single, annual meeting to inform parents of the programs. The school districts were allowed to plan parental activities when parents required to have one, but the use of Chapter I funds to support those activities was not necessary (Fege, 2006).

In 1983, Public Law 98-199 granted funds to support organized activities in parent-to-parent information and training programs for parents of children with special needs. The law resulted in 50 parent centers across the country that offered support services to parents of children with special needs (Harry, 1992).

In 1986, Public Law 99-457 reauthorized and amended the EHA. The centerpiece of this law is family involvement. Child and family characteristics are essential elements

that must be incorporated into the IFSP (Guralnick, 1989; Harry, 1992). In addition, program developers were encouraged to train parents as interventionists (Guralnick, 1989).

In 1988, the Hawkins-Stafford Amendments provided language for stronger parent involvement in the law, which required LEAs to ensure that information and services were available to parents and that there be parent involvement in program planning and implementation (NCPIE, 2007).

In 1994, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Improving America's School Act, was signed by President Clinton. The regulations under Section 1118 required Title I schools to have a written policy and a school-parent compact for parent involvement developed both by schools and parents to allow staff, students, and parents to work as a team to increase student achievement. In 1995, the first federally funded parent resource center was the Parent Information Resource Centers (PIRCs) initiative that provides parents, students, and schools training to work together in a successful manner (NCPIE, 2007).

In 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act mandated parent participation in educational placement decision making of children with disabilities (Taylor, 2004). This act emphasized the rights of parents to participate in decision making based on the belief that it was important to "strengthen the role of parents and ensure that families of such children have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home" (Section 601 (C)(5)(B)).

In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), for the first time, included a definition of parent involvement. The law required school districts to work with Title I

schools to develop programs that build capability of parents and school staff for strong parent involvement. A school district cannot receive the Title I fund until its implementation of parent involvement programs (Mapp, 2012).

In 2004, the most recent version of IDEA was reauthorized. This act gives parents of children with disabilities legal rights to accept and/or reject services provided to the children and placement during IEP meetings. In 2010, the Family Engagement in Education Act was authorized to enhance family engagement with the establishment of state and local nonprofit parent centers and the development of related training programs. IDEA gradually empowered the rights of parents of children with disabilities to participate meaningfully in education (Mapp, 2012).

Cultural Trends of Parent Involvement

Prior to the 1970s, the emphasis on parent involvement research was to analyze the psychological stages that parents go through after they learn of a child's disability. This line of literature focused mostly on White and middle-class families who could afford the services that used a psychoanalytic model which deemed parents, and especially mothers to be victims during the psychological process (Harry, 2002). The cultural beliefs and practices of families from diverse culture backgrounds were not considered in the interpretation of parent reactions. Sadly, the view nevertheless promoted the pathological view of families of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds (Harry, 1992, 2002).

In the 1970s, the emphasis on parent involvement was on increasing positive parent involvement via behavioral training programs. The majority of participants remained those White and middle-class parents whose life circumstances, child-rearing

styles, and personal interaction principles were the basis of this model (Harry, 2002). By 1980s, professionals started to emphasize cultural issues affecting participation of parents of children with disabilities; however, "the focus on disability among such groups, however, did not appear until after the introduction of P. L. 99-457, when the requirement for family-centered early intervention services forced the challenges of diversity to the foreground of special education concerns" (Harry, 2002, p. 134). This influenced changes in research practices to reflect on the collaborative relationships between parents and professionals and considered cultural issues in developing family-centered early intervention programs and parent training programs (Harry, 2002).

In the 1990s, the mandates of IDEA required professionals to involve parents from diverse cultures in the decision-making process during the IEP meetings by providing interpreters and emphasizing on cultural awareness and acceptance. Parents were expected to be equal and full partners in school systems (Kalyanpur et al., 2000). Researchers began to examine the barriers that influenced the level of involvement of parents of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds (Harry & Kalyanpur, 1994; Kalyanpur et al., 2000). Research showed that parents from CLD backgrounds were dissatisfied with the level of cultural sensitivity and understanding of professionals (Kalyanpur et al., 2000). Cultural awareness became a consideration to school administrators, educators, and related service providers when they planned conferences and meetings at school (Taylor, 2004).

Starting in the late 2000s, professionals considered cultural practices and beliefs in the design of parent education programs because culture had a great impact on family life, including parenting styles and practices (Denessen et al., 2007; Olivos, 2006;

Rafferty & Griffin, 2010). Language barriers, cultural differences, lack of knowledge of educational procedures, lack of resources, family characteristics were the possible barriers to decrease their level of involvement of parents from minority cultural background in school activities (Denessen et al., 2007; Ju et al., 2018).

Auerbach's (1995) two perspectives underlying family literacy programs were an intervention-prevention approach and a multiple-literacy approach (as cited in Denessen et al., 2007). The intervention-prevention approach relies on deficit perspectives and views parents as having an inadequate ability to promote literacy at home. On the other hand, the multiple-literacy approach considers problems such as a culture mismatch between home and school. From this point of view, parents' attitudes and beliefs are acknowledged as relevant to children's education. In addition, the multiple-literacy perspective can increase parents' self-esteem and acknowledge personal responsibility through affirmation of cultural identity that can further facilitate parents to be involved in the education of the children with disabilities (Denessen et al., 2007).

Parental involvement has been examined through several conceptual frameworks historically, legally, and culturally. Models of parent involvement (Gordon, 1979), paradigms of parent involvement (Wolfendale, 1983; 1999), bioecological system theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), types of parent involvement (Epstein, 1987; 2001b), and capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986) have been examined in terms of proposed factors that would affect the level of participation of parents who have children with or without disabilities.

The parent-school partnership is another central focus in parent-involvement research. Considering cultural differences and integrating cultural practices is essential for school administrators in regard to planning parent-teacher conferences and parent-

training programs. Rafferty and Griffin (2010) proposed three models for designing parent-training programs: an economic-stress model, an ecological systems theory, and a resilience model. Parent-training programs can better facilitate parents to increase their knowledge and skills involving special education and to foster advocacy skills.

The concept of parental involvement in the United States must be interpreted under the cultural framework from which it evolves. Pertinent to implementation of special education policies and practices, teachers and professionals might sometimes judge families of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds with assumptions of deficits (Harry & Kalyanpur, 1994; Harry, 2002, 2008). Teachers and related professionals must understand and respect the differences in parenting styles, the definition of disability, educational goals, culture values, and concerns about children's disabilities to ensure genuine participation from families of diverse cultural backgrounds in their children's special education experience. Harry (2002) specified four areas that professionals must consider when providing culturally appropriate services to families from diverse cultural backgrounds. First, professionals should acknowledge the cultural differences in definitions and interpretation of disabilities. Second, professionals should be aware of cultural differences in family-coping styles and responses to disability-related stress. Third, service providers should recognize the cultural differences in parent-child interaction styles and in the expectations of participation and advocacy. Finally, related service providers should understand the cultural differences in accessing information regarding disability and needed services.

Several researchers have proposed principles and strategies in partnership with parents of children with disability. Frederickson and Cline (2002) listed principles

suggested by the National Association for Special Education Needs that can further increase parent involvement in special education. Parents should be regarded as having a major stake in the process of developing IEPs. Partnerships between parents and professionals must have mutual respect, and participants must have a willingness to learn from each other. Parents should be encouraged and empowered by the schools to work with professionals to ensure the services provided meet their children's needs. Professionals should understand and support parents' emotional and moral needs. Every family has unique needs and traditions. Parents and professionals should have a better understanding of each other's positions so that communication is effective.

Lasky and Karge (2011) identified several strategies for increasing the involvement of language-minority parents of children with disabilities. Schools should view the teacher's role as a liaison to coordinate and communicate with parents from CLD backgrounds. If possible, teachers should make a home visit at the beginning of each semester to become familiar with the family. Schools can hire and train parents as paraprofessionals to assist other families from the same cultural backgrounds. Schools should cooperate with community cultural agencies to provide more culture-related services. School administrators should provide training to teachers for better understanding of cultural differences and promoting cultural awareness. From their suggestions, it is apparent that when professionals have a better understanding of cultural differences and family traditions, they are more likely to become open to other strategies and perspectives that can help establish relationships that are reciprocal and mutually beneficial to families of children with disabilities from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Statement of the Problem

The population of the United States is becoming increasingly diverse, which is also reflected in the increasing diversity of the student body in public schools (Ju et al., 2018; LaRocque et al., 2011). There is an increasing trend of Hispanic and Asian students enrolling in schools. The percentage of African American students enrolled in schools remained stable (Ju et al., 2018). There are differences among groups from CLD backgrounds, and school administrators and teachers are not always aware of these differences while working with parents and students from CLD backgrounds (Harry, 2008). Such differences may cause cultural conflicts and raise challenges for parents from CLD backgrounds who are involved in their children's education (LaRocque et al., 2011). Furthermore, the cultural differences between families from CLD backgrounds and schools present potential cultural misunderstandings in parental involvement (Harry, 2008; Ju et al., 2018). Factors affecting the ways in which families are involved in their children's education differ and may be related to socioeconomic status (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Wang et al., 2016), parents' past experience with schools and their perceived roles in helping children's school work (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Green et al., 2007; LaRocque et al., 2011; Walkers et al., 2005), and parents' perceptions of school climate such as welcoming attitudes from school staff to encourage parental involvement (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Green et al., 2007; Seefeldt et al., 1998).

In addition, a concern related to the low post-school achievement of students with disabilities from CLD backgrounds emerged (Ju et al., 2018). Ju et al. (2018) concluded in the meta-analysis that African American young adults with disabilities were less likely to get a job after high school, less likely to open a checking account, and less likely to

live independently than European American students with disabilities. Hispanic students with disabilities were also less likely to live independently after high school (Newman et al., 2009, as cited in Ju et al., 2018). African American, Hispanic, and Native American students with disabilities had the highest dropout rates among students with disabilities (Johnson, 2008, as citied in Ju et al., 2018).

Harry (2008) conducted a review of studies focusing on collaborative relationships between special education professionals and families of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds. Harry reviewed peer-reviewed journal articles and books published from 1975 to 2006. In this review, Harry described the impact of special education regulations on parental involvement and important ideas and strategies of meaningful collaboration between special education professionals and families from CLD backgrounds. Harry (2008) raised three main concerns about the current situation affecting the CLD families' involvement in their children's education. First, research divulged a disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories (Ford et al., 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Children from African American, Latino and Native American backgrounds continue to represent a disproportionately large percentage of some specific disability categories while children from Asian groups are disproportionately represented in educational programs for students meeting eligibility criteria for gifted programs (Scherba de Valenzuela et al., 2006). Second, "our nation's history of exclusion and marginalization of CLD groups continues to present the education system with the challenge of historically embedded prejudices that are reinforced when children from such groups have the further characterization of disability" (Harry, 2008, p. 372). Third, definitions of disability were

different across cultures, which contribute to misunderstandings and miscommunications between parents and related professionals. Harry's research highlights the need to investigate perceptions and/or barriers to parental involvement for parents of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds and their roles in their children's education (Harry, 2008).

Ju et al. (2018) conducted a review to synthesize family involvement in transition planning of their children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds. They reviewed peer-reviewed journal articles published from 2004 to 2016. A total of nine articles met the inclusion criteria. They indicated that six out of nine studies reported parents from CLD backgrounds had a lower level of involvement in transition planning or IEP meetings related to transition. Five articles revealed major barriers preventing CLD parents from involving in transition planning. These barriers included professionals' attitudes and knowledge in relation to parents' traditional culture, communication between school staff and parents, family lack of knowledge to educational process in the U.S., family challenges such as poverty and domestic violence, and difficulties to access information and resources. Ju et al. (2018) indicated a need of conducting research to specifically investigate barriers to CLD parents involving in their children's special education. Therefore, conducting a quantitative study using a larger sample size to further understand parents' perspectives on parental involvement in their children's (special) education is needed.

Rationale for the Study

Several researchers focused on parents' or caregivers' active involvement in their children's learning both at home and at school as major components of parental

involvement in general education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sander, 1995, 1997, 2005; López, 2001). In the review conducted by Harry (2008), several studies used qualitative research designed to elicit parents' perspectives on parental involvement, specifically from families of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds. Harry (2008) and Ju et al. (2018) indicated that it is important for educators and professionals to examine perceptions of parental involvement in their children's education from parents of children with disabilities from different cultural backgrounds.

Research has found that influential factors included beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, general invitations from school, parental education levels, and marital status (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Green et al., 2007; Waanders et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2016). However, few studies have been conducted to examine parents' perspectives of their involvement in the special education experiences of their children with disabilities from different cultural backgrounds and the factors influencing parental involvement of families from CLD backgrounds who have a child with a disability (Jeynes, 2016; Ju et al., 2018; Lasky et al., 2011).

The expectation of parental involvement in the U.S. may not exist in the cultural repertoire of families from CLD backgrounds (Ju et al., 2018; Lopez, 2001). Consequently, parents who are not involved in their children's education in the traditional way as defined by the dominant culture are often perceived as being uninvolved in their children's education (Lopez, 2001). Therefore, it is critical to examine CLD parents' experiences and perspectives of parental involvement in their child's education using a quantitative method. Specifically, it is important to explore how parental education level, marital status, income, their belief of roles in parental involvement, parental perception of

self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school, and their perception about school climate, impact their level of involvement in their children's education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine (1) the levels of parental involvement among parents from different ethnic groups, (2) to what extent parental education level, income, and marital status predicted parental involvement in their children's education, and (3) the extent to which the personal and contextual factors, along with parental education level, income, and marital status predicted parental involvement in home-based and school-based activities.

Specific research questions were:

1. What are the levels of parental involvement (i.e., beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, parent involvement in home-based and school-based activities, and school climate)?
2. To what extent did marital status, parental education level, and income predict parental involvement?
3. To what extent did marital status, parental educational level, and income), beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, and school climate predict parental involvement in home-based and school-based activities?

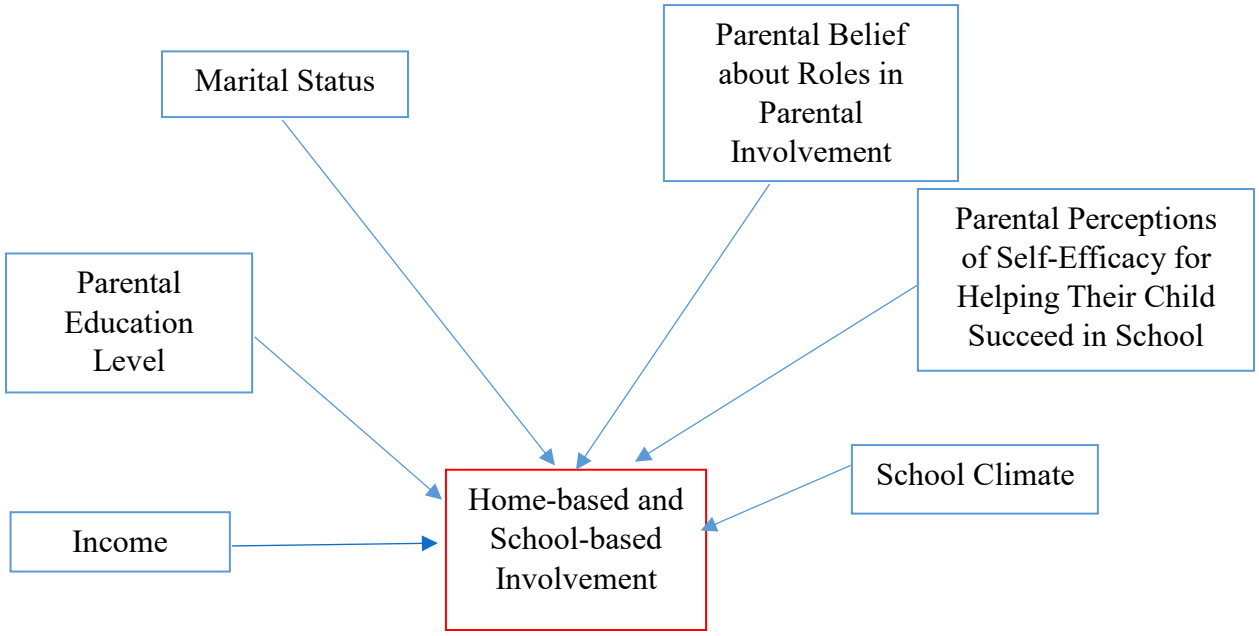

Figure 1

The Hypothesized Model Predicting Home-based and School-based Involvement

Definitions of Key Terms

Parental involvement is defined in NCLB as

> the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities including ensuring that (a) parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; (b) parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; (c) parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and (d) other activities are carried out such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA (Section 9101(32)).

In this current study, parental involvement includes four aspects: (a) beliefs in their roles in education, (b) parental perception of self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school, (c) home-based and school-based activities, and (d) school climate.

1. Beliefs in Roles is defined as parental beliefs in their roles for involvement in children's education (Walkers et al., 2005)
2. Parental Perception of Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School is defined as parental perceptions of themselves of being capable of helping their child succeed in school (Walkers, et al., 2005).
3. Home-based Activities and School-based Involvement is defined as the participation of caregivers (including parents, grandparents, stepparents, foster parents, etc.) in either *home-based or school-based activities* promoting the educational process of their children age 3 to 21 in order to enhance their academic and social wellbeing (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005). Home-Based Activities are related to educational activities parents completed with their child. For example, talking to the child about the school day or helping their child complete homework (Walkers et al., 2005). School-Based Activities refer to any educational activities parents attend to support their child at school (e.g., attending a special event at school or helping out at the school event; Walkers et al., 2005).
4. School Climate is defined as the encompassing attitudes (e.g., the level of school welcoming parents to be involved in their children's education) and beliefs inside the school environment and outside the school (Seefeldt et al., 1998), as well as general school and teacher invitations (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

5. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Population is defined as people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds involved in different languages and cultural traditions (Kim & Morningstar, 2005). In this study, the participants consist of parents who were Hispanic, Native American, African American, and Asian American.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter, I conducted a systematic review of relevant research that examined parents' level of involvement and barriers to their involvement in their children's special education from CLD backgrounds.

Research has found that parents play an important role in supporting their children's high achievement (Bouffard &Weiss, 2008; Epstein, 2001a, 2001b; Pushor & Murphy, 2004; Underwood, 2010) and in improving their children's learning behaviors (Domina, 2005). Parental involvement improves not only the children's achievement but also the quality of their school (Gordon, 1978).

Rioux and Berla (1993) identified three major benefits of parental involvement: student achievement, teachers' work satisfaction, and school climate. Rioux and Berla further indicated that Lareau (1989) identified three types of parent involvement that resulted in greater teacher satisfaction: (a) parents help children prepare themselves to learn at school, (b) parents volunteer in the classroom activities, and (c) parents help children with homework and reading at home. Finally, Rioux and Berla reported that Haynes et al. (1989) conducted a survey to elicit perceptions of school climate after introducing a parent involvement program within 14 schools, seven of which were control schools and seven of which were experimental schools. Haynes et al. (1989) found significant and positive changes in school climate in the seven experimental schools. Specifically, teachers, students, and parents reported that the schools which had introduced the parent involvement program had an encouraging climate.

Research indicates that parental involvement in their children's IEP meetings and the transition planning process has numerous benefits for parents and their children with disabilities (Lasky & Karge, 2011). These benefits included the development of positive relationships between parents and related professionals, and the positive educational outcomes of students with disabilities. Active parent involvement helped parents to adapt their new roles to their children's transition process (Kim & Morningstar, 2005).

Systematic Review of Research

Locating Articles

A number of databases were accessed including PsychINFO, Education Research Complete, and EBSCO Beta in this review. *Parent involvement, family involvement, parent participation, individuals with disabilities, barriers, cultural diversity, and education* were the terms used to search for the articles. Peer-reviewed English journal articles published from 1975 to 2020 were targeted. In 1975, Public Law 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children Act or EHA) was first enacted by Congress. Later, the EHA was modified and codified as the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Some regulations contained in the EHA and IDEA promote parent participation in the special education process and delineated discriminatory treatment for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Torres-Burgo et al., 1987). Thus, empirical studies emerged to examine parents' experiences with their participation in their children's special education since then. Alternating the terms "*parent involvement," "family involvement," and "parent participation,"* in searches with the term *"individuals with disabilities"* and *"cultural diversity"* to locate articles found two articles in the PsychINFO database. In Education Research Complete

database, only two articles were located using the same search criteria. Using "*parent involvement," "individuals with disabilities," "education," and "barriers*" as search terms yielded six articles in PsychINFO and twenty-eight articles in Education Research Complete. Using "*parent involvement," "individuals with disabilities,*" and *"education"* to search in Education Research Complete, 226 articles appeared. Using "*parent involvement, "individuals with disabilities,"* and *"education*" to search in PsychINFO database, 94 articles were found. Alternating "*parent involvement*," "*family involvement,"* and *"parent participation"* with the terms *"individuals with disabilities," "education," "barriers,"* and *"cultural diversity"* as search terms in EBSCO Databases found two articles. A preliminary search of analysis from the three databases yielded 51 articles from which the articles for this study were determined using inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria were as follows: studies were included in the review if they (a) were published in peer-reviewed journals in English between 1975 and 2020; (b) included families of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds and/or families who were European American; (c) were conducted in the United States; and (d) examined parental perceptions and experiences of their involvement in their children's special education program and process.

Exclusion criteria were as follows: (a) studies did not include or specify parents from CLD backgrounds but included parents of children with disabilities (Benson et al., 2008; Chen & Gregory, 2011; Coots; 1998; MacLeod et al., 2017; Meyers & Blacher, 1987; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999; Rispolis et al., 2018; Rogers et al., 2009; Waanders et

al., 2007; Zablotsky et al., 2012); (b) studies did not focus on parents of children with disabilities but focused on parents from CLD backgrounds (Anderson et al., 2007; Coll et al., 2002; Dahlstedt, 2009; Green et al., 2007; Ji et al., 2009; Lopez, 2001; Olivos, 2004; Patrikakou & Weissberg, 2000; Wang, 2008; Welchons & McIntyre, 2015); (c) studies focused on reviews of literature and did not use any measurements to collect data directly from parents of children with disabilities (Bailey, 2001; Brotherson, 2001; Cotton et al.,1989; Denessen et al., 2007; Harry, 2008; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Jeynes; 2016; Ju et al., 2018; Lasky et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2018); (d) studies were not conducted in the United States (Hebel & Persitz, 2014; Lai & Ishiyama, 2004; Lai & Vadeboncoeur, 2012; Lindsay et al., 2016; Mavrogianni & Lampropoulou, 2020; Szumski & Karwowski, 2012; Underwood, 2010; Wang et al., 2016; Yotyodying & Wild, 2016); and (e) studies focused on school facilitation of parent involvement but not the barriers to their involvement in special education (Elbaum et al., 2016).

As a result, twelve studies that met the inclusion criteria were included in this systematic review. It included four qualitative studies utilizing interviews, one study implementing mixed methods, and seven quantitative studies employing survey methods.

Major Findings of the Studies

Qualitative Studies. Harry et al. (1995) conducted a three-year qualitative study with the use of interviews and observation of the interaction between professionals and parents to elicit perspectives of African American parents of children with disabilities in involvement in their children's special education. A total of 24 African American families participated in this study. Within these families, twelve of them participated in this study over three years, six participated in the first year, and six participated in the

second and the third years. Semi-structured and unstructured interviews with parents were conducted and recorded at these families' preferred settings: either at home or in a private room in the school building. The range of the interview was from 45 minutes to 2 hours in length. Researchers also interviewed eight related professionals to obtain additional information of placement process and perspectives of parent involvement. The observation data was collected when families had parent conferences and informative conversation with school personnel and related professionals.

A total of 50 codes were first generated during the process of interpretation. Later, the researchers grouped them into themes. Seven findings were reported: (1) families supporting their children in learning and attending school related activities; (2) segregation of special education program for their children with disabilities; (3) stigmatization of their children's disabilities; (4) barriers to prevent them from involving in their children's education including late notice, inflexible scheduling of conferences, and time constraints; (5) emphasizing the documentation rather than participation; (6) the frequent use of jargon, and (7) the hierarchical power structure of conferences forcing parents to listen instead of offering opinions.

Landmark et al. (2007) conducted a qualitative study using a telephone interview to examine parents' experiences in the transition planning of their children with disabilities. A total of 19 parents of high school students with disabilities participated in the study. Among these 19 parents, five were Hispanic, one was Asian American, six were African American, and seven were European American. The telephone interviews were recorded, and the audiotapes were transcribed for data analysis. Content analysis was utilized to analyze the data.

Six themes emerged from the study. The first theme was the lack of knowledge of transition planning. Specifically, three African American and two Hispanic parents reported that they were not familiar with transition planning. The Asian American parent and one Hispanic parent mentioned they were uncertain about how much their children understood the transition process due to the severity of their children's disabilities. The second theme was the knowledge of legal requirement for transition. Only one African American parent and one Hispanic parent were able to provide some legal documents relevant to transition planning. The third theme was parental involvement in transition planning. The levels and types of parental involvement in transition planning varied among groups. Five out of six African American parents participated in the transition process by attending the meeting and advocating for their own child. The Asian American parent participated in the transition planning passively by following the district plan. Three out of five Hispanic parents reported that they did not involvement in the transition planning for their children with disabilities. The fourth theme was indicators of parental participation. The majority of parents except for the Asian American parent reported that attending school meetings was an indicator of parental participation. Only one Hispanic parent mentioned communication with the school was related to parental participation. Four African American parents and one Asian American parent indicated that providing support at home was a type of parental participation. Two Hispanic American parents mentioned that advocating for the child was an indicator of parental participation. The fifth one was barriers of involvement. These participants also addressed their barriers to involvement in the transition process. African American and Hispanic parents reported work related barriers such as a busy work schedule and

exhaustion after work. Hispanic parents reported communication barriers such as a lack of communication from schools. The final theme was the support for parental involvement in their child's transition planning. Parents reported that community supports, financial supports, parent support groups, interpreter and translation services and parent education would be beneficial for them to increase their levels of transition planning.

Hughes et al. (2008) examined the experiences of Latino families in regard to the special education program their children with disabilities were in and their level of involvement in education. A semi-structured interview was conducted to collect the in-depth information from 16 families of children with disabilities enrolled in elementary schools. Thirteen open-ended questions were asked during the interview. All interviews were conducted at the family's home and lasted for approximately 75 minutes. Data were transcribed, summarized, and coded by the researchers.

Three primary themes were identified after data analysis: (a) raising a child with special needs, (b) expectations and goals for the child, and (c) experiences with schooling. Most families indicated that they treated their children with disabilities the same as other children without disabilities. However, their level of involvement in their children's education was different. For their children with disabilities, the involvement required more time commitment and they had to be more aware of their children's needs. Additionally, they expressed their worries, frustration, sadness and helplessness for the school life and future of their children with disabilities. Most families stated the primary goal for their children with disabilities was to be independent and have a normal life. Other goals addressed were improvement in physical and academic capacities. With

regard to the experiences and their involvement in schooling, families stated that they were worried about their children's academic progress. They all agreed on the importance of parent involvement and its impact on their children's education. They assisted in their children's homework, provided learning activities at home, and visited classrooms on a regular basis. These involvement activities took place during the daily routines.

Wilson (2015) conducted a qualitative study to examine parental decision making while they were involved in IEP meetings. Wilson focused on the types of questions parents asked and advocacy statements they made during the IEP meetings. A total of eight CLD parents of children with disabilities participated in this study. Seven parents were African American and one parent was Native and African American. Parents were interviewed about their experiences of previous IEP meetings and interviewed subsequently about their most recent IEP meetings for a follow-up study. The semi-structural interviews lasted for about an hour. Parents were also encouraged to bring in any documents such as letters from the IEP team and IEP contracts for further analysis.

Three themes emerged after the data were analyzed. The first theme was meeting expectations regarding the information provided to parents prior to the IEP meeting and their preparation for the meeting. The second theme was parental questioning and perceived reactions focusing on parent experiences asking questions and receiving responses from the IEP teams. The last theme was impact of advocacy and collaboration depicting the advocacy statements parents had during the IEP meeting. The results also indicated that prior to the IEP meetings, parents were not expected to ask questions and advocate for their children. In addition, schools also failed to provide a description of desired parental involvement. In this study, parents reported that their use of direct

questioning could be seen as a form of advocacy to address their concerns for children's special education. Parents also reported that they were able to refine the goals and outcomes for their children in collaboration with the IEP team while voicing their concerns. Wilson further suggested that in order to increase parental involvement in IEP meetings, pre-IEP meetings should occur with the guidance of an IEP coordinator to ensure parents receive adequate information about the meeting and to address concerns parents would have for the upcoming IEP meeting. With the support of an IEP coordinator, parents could learn how to ask and answer questions related to their children's goals as well as outcomes and could gain knowledge and expertise so that they can advocate for their children in a meaningful way.

Mixed-Methods Study. Hughes et al. (2002) conducted a mixed method study using telephone questionnaires and individual interviews to examine 44 Latino families' involvement in their children's special education program. The parent involvement questionnaire was developed for this study and comprised Likert-type questions and open-ended questions. The questionnaires were administered in the family's preferred language and lasted for approximately 20 minutes. Sixteen of these families were randomly selected to have an individual interview. The interviews took place at the family's home and lasted for approximate 75 minutes.

Findings were reported based on three research questions: (a) what were the perceptions of Latinos parents of their child's special education program? (b) How was the family involved in their child's education? and (c) How did schools communicate with these families? Overall, families were satisfied with the program their children were in and their involvement in education. In addition, parents indicated that they received

regular communication from schools, and they were also satisfied with overall communication. However, some families were still concerned about the length of the placement process and their children's academic progress. For the majority of families, family involvement included every aspect of the children's life such as education, development and socialization. They further specified that awareness of their children's disabilities, intensity, and time commitment made their level of involvement in the education of their children with disabilities different compared to families of children without disabilities. The types of activities these families were involved in were attending parent-teacher meetings and conferences, visiting their children's classrooms, assisting with reading, helping with homework, and providing extra learning activities at home. With regard to home-school communication, families stated that the provision of interpreters, training regarding disabilities as well as suggestions of involvement activities, avoidance of jargons, and welcoming atmosphere would increase their level of involvement.

Quantitative Studies. Fishman and Nickerson (2015) conducted a study examining Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model of parent involvement. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to examine whether the motivational factors such as Parent Role Activity Beliefs, Parent Efficacy, General School Invitations, Specific Teacher Invitation, Specific Child Invitations, Perceived Knowledge and Skills, and Perceived Time and Energy predicted the levels of home-based, school-based, and special education involvement. Family structure, ethnicity, and social economic status were included as controlled variables. A total of 137 parents of elementary school students in special education participated in this study. The majority of the participants

(87.6%) were European Americans. A series of three hierarchical regression analysis were conducted to identify the potential predictors of the levels of parental involvement. The independent variables for this study included beliefs in roles (i.e., parental role construction), parental self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school, and school climate (e.g., general school invitations and specific teacher invitations). The dependent variables were home-based and school-based activities.

Fishman and Nickerson (2015) reported several findings. First, general school invitations negatively predicted home-based involvement. When parents felt schools being more welcoming, communicative, and informative, they tended to involve less in home-based activities. Specific child invitations positively predicted home-based involvement. When children specifically requested parents to participate in their education, parents would participate more in both home-based activities. Second, parental education level, role activity beliefs, specific child invitations, and time and energy significantly and positively predicted school-based involvement. Finally, specific teacher invitations predicted parents' special education involvement. When teachers engaged parents more in participating in IEP meetings and school activities, parents in general would increase their levels of special education involvement.

Lynch and Stein (1982) employed a questionnaire to elicit the perspectives of parents' participation in their children's IEP process of 328 families of students in a special education program in a school district in southern California. Among these families, 72.6% were European Americans and 27.4% were families from CLD backgrounds. A total of 21 special education parent facilitators and three bilingual translators were trained to conduct fact-to-face interviews at the parents' homes. In the

beginning of the study, 400 participants were randomly selected from the rosters in the school district. A letter of invitation to participate in the study was mailed to these families. The interviewers then contacted families via phone calls several days after mailing out the letters to arrange an individual interview. The interviews were conducted in the families' preferred language and lasted approximately 30 minutes. A total of 328 families were interviewed.

Findings suggest that 71% of families expressed that they were actively involved in the development of the IEP. They also stated that their ways of being actively involved in the IEP development were by expressing opinions and offering suggestions as well as working with professionals. Most families reported that they signed and received a copy of the IEP. In addition, 76% of them reported that they were satisfied with the current special education program their children received. The researchers found significant differences in parents' participation in the IEP process in the child's age, ethnicity, and disability category. Families of children aged 13 to 14 years old with disabilities reported being less frequently involved in the IEP meetings and signing the IEP than families with children at different ages. Families of children with learning disabilities expressed more frequently that the district identified their children's needs earlier than families of children with other types of disabilities (communicatively handicapped, physically handicapped, and severely handicapped). With regard to ethnicity differences, parents from Caucasian backgrounds were significantly more aware of services listed on their children's IEP than parents from other cultural backgrounds. Hispanic parents less frequently offered suggestions during the IEP meetings.

Stein (1983) conducted a survey study to explore the attitudes, satisfaction, and participation of Hispanic parents of children with disabilities. In addition, Stein examined differences in parent's perceptions between families of children with learning disabilities and families of children with other types of disabilities. Two hundred and thirteen Hispanic families of children with disabilities participated in the study. A letter of invitation written in both English and Spanish was mailed to each family. Trained interviewers called families to get permission to conduct an individual interview. A total of 62 families including 32 families of children with learning disabilities, 25 families of children with communicative disabilities, physical disabilities, and severe disabilities as well as five unidentifiable disabilities were interviewed. The interview instrument was a 64-item questionnaire with forced-choice and open-ended questions. Eighty-four percent of interviews were conducted with mothers of children with disabilities.

The majority of participating families reported that they were satisfied with their children's current special education program and the process time to get services. In addition, they reported the teaching professionals were effective. Parents of children with learning disabilities reported more frequently having problems with school personnel than families of children with other types of categories. In addition, they also reported having problems less frequently when (a) the district identified their children's needs as soon as possible, (b) their children were receiving all services on the IEP, and (c) they were satisfied with the school as a place to learn. However, no significant differences were found between families of children with learning disabilities and families of children with other types of disabilities.

Comparing the involvement in the IEP process between these two family groups, parents of children with learning disabilities reported more frequently being contacted by the district, having their rights explained clearly, and knowing what services were included in the IEP. On the other hand, parents of children with other types of disabilities reported more frequently understanding the assessment fully, finding goals and objectives to be written clearly, and actively participating in the IEP meetings. Based on the Chi-square test of significance results, no significant differences were found between groups.

With regard to opportunities to participate in the IEP development, parents with other types of disabilities reported that they more frequently heard from the teacher and felt welcome to observe in class. However, no significant statistical differences were found between the two groups. In general, barriers for Hispanic parents to participating in the IEP development and meetings were time conflict and English language proficiency.

Lynch and Stein (1987) examined Hispanic parents' satisfaction and participation in their child's special education program. They randomly sampled 213 Hispanic families in the district and sent out a request to interview. A total of 71 families responded and agreed to participate in the study. Three well-trained Special Education Parent Facilitators then contacted them to arrange an individual interview. Sixty-three families were interviewed. All of them were Mexican American and with limited English proficiency. The interview instrument was adapted from the questionnaire designed by San Diego State University Teacher Corps School-Community Task Force. Sixty-four items were included and available in both English and Spanish versions. The questionnaire included both open-ended and forced-choice items. The interview was conducted in the family's preferred language. As a result, all the families were

interviewed in Spanish. The open-ended responses were coded and analyzed by the staff at San Diego State University's Social Science Research Lab.

The results were reported under four themes: (a) attitude towards personnel and process, (b) participation in IEP development, (c) opportunities to participate, and (d) barriers to active parent participation. In responses regarding attitude towards personnel and process, the majority of families were satisfied with early identification services provided by the district, the length of placement process, the effectiveness of professionals, the current special education program, and their child's schools. However, approximately half of the families had ideas about what services were listed in their child's IEPs and stated that their children received such services. In addition, twenty-nine percent of the families indicated that they had issues dealing with school personnel. With regard to participation in the development of the IEP, the majority of families stated that they received information prior to the assessment, and understood the assessment, their rights, the goals and objectives of their child's IEP, and services provided in the IEP. Nonetheless, only half of the families felt that they were involved in the assessment process and participated actively in the IEP development. Approximately one third of the families reported providing suggestions during IEP meetings, and fewer than half felt they were able to work with teachers and school personnel to develop goals and objectives for their children during the meeting.

Under the theme of opportunities to participate, the researchers reported that the majority of Hispanic families were contacted by teachers in regard to their children's school life. The reasons for contact in rank order were to report academic progress, provide information, share good things about their child, and report a behavior or

attendance problem. This finding was similar to the finding from the Anglo families. The African American families reported that the most frequent reason for teachers' contact was to report a behavior or attendance problem. The majority of families stated that they felt welcome to observe classroom teaching, but only 43% had actually observed their children's class. Moreover, 60% of parents were aware of their children's records, but only 18% examined the records. While talking about barriers to actively participate in their children's education, these Hispanic families reported that more than half of them were unable to attend the IEP meetings. The main reasons for the absence in IEP meetings were job related issues, no interpretation services, problems communicating with teachers, transportation problems, and child care needs. Ninety-five percent of parents stated the need for parent education on special education law, parent and student rights, discipline skills, and criteria for eligibility and placement.

The results showed that Hispanic parents were significantly more positive than African American and Anglo parents in the identification of their child's needs. Hispanic parents were less involved in their children's special education program and offered fewer suggestions than Anglo parents. In addition, Hispanic parents were significantly more likely to rate school personnel effective than were African American counterparts.

Sontag and Schacht (1994) conducted a survey study to investigate ethnic differences in parent perceptions of information needs and parent participation in early intervention of their children with developmental delays. One thousand parents who had young children with developmental problems from a southwestern state in the United States were selected as the initial pool. Researchers then contacted these potential participants via phone calls and individual home visits to schedule interviews. A total of

601 interviews were conducted. After collected data were screened, 65 interviews were excluded because of incomplete questionnaires. The final sample was 536 families. Ethnicity representation from the final sample did not significantly differ from the population in the state. In addition, urban and rural families represented equal proportion in the sample. The distribution of families' ethnicity was 75% European American, 15% Hispanic, 5% Native American, and 3% Asian and other minorities. The majority of participating families met the criteria of low-income households. The average age of the children with developmental problems was 2 years. The instrument of this study was a close-ended questionnaire specifically developed by the researchers through an analysis of professional literature regarding key issues that families of children with special needs faced. A focus group discussion with 10 families and other professionals was conducted as a pilot study to refine the questions and to ensure the avoidance of jargon and reduce the language level of questions. The questionnaire was conducted via a face-to-face interview with parents in their homes and lasted for 60 to 90 minutes. For the interviews with minority ethnic groups, the researchers conducted the interviews in the families' preferred language.

The results indicated that parents of children with developmental delays were in need of learning about the availability of services and having more knowledge of the system of early intervention programs in order to increase their level of involvement. The majority of parents reported that medical doctors and doctors' offices were the main sources for them to get useful information. However, most parents reported that they had obtained confusing and incomplete information from service providers. The majority of parents indicated that they were involved in decision making of their children's early

intervention program, and provision of transportation for their children to get services. On the other hand, only 38% of parents had attended program planning meetings. Approximately half of parents stated that they had a coordinator either parents themselves or a case manager coordinating all the needed services. They also addressed that responsibility of coordinating their children's program fell upon case managers and parents themselves. Almost half of parents reported the need of having more time, obtaining all the information from service providers, and getting easy access to their children's records.

Results showed that Native American and Hispanic parents were in greater need of information about accessing services than European American parents. They also selected hospitals as a place to get the information significantly more frequently than European American parents. In addition, they selected therapists less frequently as a source of information. Two minority groups of parents also reported that they were less likely to coordinate their children's services. Native American parents required information more frequently on parents' rights than the two other groups. Moreover, they reported, at a significant level, not being told reasons of unavailability of certain services more often than two other groups. On the other hand, Hispanic parents reported at a significant level not being told what could be done for their children than two other groups. European American parents engaged at a more significant level in decision making about their children's programs than two minority groups.

With regard to sharing information to other parents, Hispanic and Native American parents were less likely to do it than European American parents. Native American parents less frequently volunteered in their children's program. They also

expressed more frequently that language used by service providers was easily understood and contributed less frustration when communicating with service providers. European American parents reported having more time to increase their involvement than Hispanic and Native American parents. In addition, they reported more frequently than the two other groups that the professionals did not listen to them.

Torres-Burgo et al. (1999) conducted a survey study to elicit perceptions of Hispanic and non-Hispanic parents of children with learning disabilities enrolled in elementary schools on the special education process. Twenty-one elementary schools were first selected to participate in this study because these schools provided the specific learning disability program and had a mixed population of Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. The researchers then contacted principals of these schools to assess their interest in participating in the study. As a result, thirteen of them agreed to take part in this study. The survey developed by the researchers included 10 items asking for demographic information and 35 items related to learning disability services. The survey was divided into three types of responses: yes/no response, rating scale, and short answer. Both the letter of introduction and the survey questions were written in English and then translated into Spanish by two of the researchers. A pilot study was conducted to elicit problems inherent in the survey and understand the likely response rate of the survey. The pilot surveys were delivered to 30 Hispanic and non-Hispanic parents and only 5 surveys were returned. A total of 176 Spanish and 148 English survey packages were delivered to participating schools. Each survey package contains a letter of introduction, a $1 incentive, a form for requesting results of the study, and a stamped return envelope. The surveys were distributed by the teachers to the children with learning disabilities who

were asked to bring the package to their parents. Consequently, fifty surveys were returned which included 27 Spanish surveys and 23 English surveys.

The demographic results showed that the children reported from the parents were aged from 6 to 14 years old. All the non-Hispanic children spoke English at home while 26% of children from Hispanic households spoke English, 26% spoke either Spanish or English and 48% spoke primarily Spanish at home. In the non-Hispanic group, male and female children were represented as of 55% and 45% respectively while in the Hispanic group there were more males than females: 65% and 35% respectively.

The results showed that Hispanic parents were significantly less likely to have their rights explained in their native language than non-Hispanic parents. Hispanic parents were significantly less likely to be asked their understanding of the child's IEP than non-Hispanic parents. Hispanic parents were less aware of the severity of their child's learning disability and the types of special education services provided than their non-Hispanic counterparts. Hispanic parents communicated less with special education teachers on a regular basis than non-Hispanic parents. Hispanic parents were offered suggestions of helping children with homework by teachers less frequently than non-Hispanic parents. Results indicated that non-Hispanic parents were less satisfied with the level of involvement in their children's special education program than Hispanic parents. The qualitative results showed that both parent groups were in need of formal parent education to better help their children learn at home. Hispanic parents stated their desire for bilingual special education teachers, better home-school communication, the use of discipline rules, and a smaller teacher-student ratio. Non-Hispanic parents stated their

desire for more spacious classrooms, better classroom materials, and a better understanding of learning disability.

Parent involvement is one of the central elements of IDEA (Harry, 2008). The importance of parent involvement and its influence on student achievement is not negligible (Lasky & Karge, 2011). Some researchers focused on the outcomes of parent involvement for students in general. Others emphasized barriers to effective parent involvement. However, little was done to understand the perspectives of families from CLD backgrounds who have a child with a disability (Lasky et al., 2011). These six studies indicated several barriers for families from CLD backgrounds to parent involvement in education. Limited English proficiency, transportation problems, time conflict, babysitting, cultural differences in the definitions of disability and parent involvement, absence of welcoming atmospheres, the frequent use of jargon, and teachers' reluctant attitudes prevent CLD families from actively participating in their children's special education.

In sum, the previous studies pinpointed that parents from different ethnic groups have various levels of participation in special education. Hispanic parents offered fewer suggestions in the IEP meetings than non-Hispanic parents. They were also less involved in their children's special education. Native American parents were less likely to volunteer in their children's program than Caucasian and Hispanic parents. In addition, teachers were less likely to communicate with parents of CLD backgrounds regarding knowledge about available services, understanding of their children's IEPs, and suggestions in helping children with homework. Different cultures have different views and definitions of parent involvement. Understanding cultural differences can help to

eliminate the gap between school personnel and families and provide effective support to CLD families that want to increase their level of involvement in their children's special education (Harry, 2008; Ju et al., 2018; Lasky et al., 2011; Lopez, 2001;). Thus, the need to conduct research to examine potential factors that may affect parents of children with disabilities from different cultural backgrounds is critical.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHDOLOGY

Introduction

Chapter 3 described the Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological model and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model of parental involvement. It also provided an overview of the research design and methodology, participant selection, data collection methods, the measure used in the study, and data analysis.

Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Model

In this study, I used Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological model to guide the design of the survey. The aims of this study were to examine the levels of parental involvement and how the *person* factors (i.e., SES) and *contextual* factors influenced parents' level of involvement in the education of their children with disabilities through proximal processes. The core component of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model was the proximal processes which described the interactions between the individual and the immediate environments. Four nested *contexts* (microsystems, exosystems, mesosystems, and macrosystems) were the basis of the survey design. The demographic information, Role Beliefs Activities, and Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School sections were utilized to examine parental socioeconomic status and their beliefs in roles and self-efficacy to reflect how the microsystems influence parental involvement. The socioeconomic status, marital status, and ethnicity variables reflected on the *person* component of this model. The School Climate section was designed to examine perceptions of parents about how school environments affected their level of involvement

in their children's special education, reflecting the effect of macrosystem on the mutual interactions of families and schools and on parent involvement.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's Model of Parent Involvement

In this study, I adapted Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model of parent involvement. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2005) proposed that parents' motivational beliefs, parents' perceptions of invitations for involvement from others, and parents' perceived life context contribute to parent involvement behaviors (i.e., home- and school-based involvement). Specifically, the model describes both personal motivators (i.e., parents' self-efficacy and their construction of their role) and contextual factors (i.e., parents' perceptions of school, teacher, and child invitation to be involved) predict parent involvement. (a) *Parents' Motivational Beliefs* was defined as parental role construction and parental self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school. *Parents' Perceptions of Invitations for Involvement from Others* was defined as perceptions of general school invitations, specific child invitations, and specific teacher invitations. *Parent's Perceived Life Context* was defined as self-perceived knowledge and skills and self-perceived time and energy. *Parental Involvement Behaviors* were defined as home-based and school-based involvement. In this study, I focused on the first two levels of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model: (1) why were parents involved (i.e., personal motivators that included parents' motivational beliefs and contextual factors that included parents' perceptional of invitations for involvement from others, and how they became involved in their child's education in general (i.e., parental involvement behaviors: home-based and school-based involvement, Research Questions 1 and 2) , and (2) to what extent the reasons why parents became involved, along with other factors such as parental education

level, income, and marital status predicted their involvement behavior in their child's learning (i.e., home-based and school-based involvement, Research Question 3). See the hypothesized model in Figure 1. Empirical studies that tested this model supported the findings that the motivational factors and parents' perceptions of invitations for involvement from others predicted home-based and school-based involvement among parents of students with disabilities (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015).

Research has also indicated that role construction and self-efficacy had differential prediction to home-based versus school-based activities (Green et al., 2007; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992; Walker et al., 2005). In addition, different cultures have different views and definitions of parent involvement. Researchers should not account only for school-based activities as the main source of parent involvement (Lasky & Karge., 2011). Therefore, it is important to examine the combined home-based and school-based involvement as well as parental involvement in at home and school separately.

The purpose of this study was to examine (1) the levels of parental involvement among parents from different ethnic groups, (2) to what extent parental education level, income, and marital status predicted parental involvement in their children's education, and (3) the extent to which the personal and contextual factors, along with parental education level, income, and marital status predicted parental involvement in home-based and school-based activities.

Specific research questions were:

1. What are the levels of parental involvement (i.e., beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, parent involvement in home-based and school-based activities, and school climate)?
2. To what extent did marital status, parent educational level, and income predict parental involvement?
3. To what extent did marital status, parent educational level, and income), beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, and school climate predict parental involvement in home-based and school-based activities?

Participants

Based on the Digest of Education Statistic released by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES; 2013), there were a total of 2,808,057 CLD children aged three to 21 years old served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B, enrolled in schools in the Academic Year 2011-2012 in the United States. I used an online sample size calculator developed by the National Statistical Service (NSS; 2015) and set a 95% Confidence Level with a 10% Confidence Interval; as a result, the minimum sample size was 97 parents. Considering an estimated attrition of 20%, I planned to recruit approximately 120 parents and/or primary caregivers of children with disabilities who were receiving special education services based on the eligibility of the 13 disability categories defined by IDEA (2004) aged 3 to 21. These 13 disability categories are autism, deaf-blindness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, and Developmental Delay. Parents or guardians were included if they: (a) had a child who

received special education services based on the 13 disability categories defined by IDEA; (b) spoke and read English; and (c) were from CLD backgrounds.

Participants were recruited from non-profit family centers via their listserv from the New Mexico Asian Family Center (NMAFC), Parent Reaching Out (PRO), National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE), the Family Involvement Center, Native American Youth and Family Center, the Hispanic Family Center, the African American Family and Cultural Center, and Open Door for Multicultural Families in the United States. Participants were expected to be more females than males in the study according to the previous literature (Harry, 2008; Lasky & Karge, 2011).

A total of 112 parents (75.9% females) participated in the study. Table 1 presents detailed information on participants' characteristics and their children's characteristics.

The majority of participants were Asian American parents or caregivers (83.9%) due to my professional relationships with the New Mexico Asian Family Center (NMAFC). I had been volunteering at NMAFC since 2011. The center director highly promoted this research and referred it to other Asian American non-profit organizations in the U.S. In the early stage of the data collection, only a few surveys were returned. As soon as I addressed my concerns about the slow and low response rate in the second reminder email to the center directors, the NMAFC center director and staff immediately provided support to recruit more participants.

Half of the participants were parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Many parents of children with ASD have been involved in their children's interventions and education for a number of years before their children enter kindergarten. For example, many parents implement interventions at home. The

interventions often continue into elementary school (Garbacz et al., 2016). Parents' involvement in their children with ASD may go through the entirety of life, given the lifelong course of ASD. This might explain why more parents of children with ASD participated in this study.

Table 1

Demographic Data of Participants and their Children

	n	%
Marital status		
Married	89	79.5
Divorced	11	9.8
Separated	5	4.5
Widowed	2	1.8
Single	5	4.5
Respondent relationship to child		
Mother	86	76.8
Father	19	17
Grandmother	3	2.7
Stepmother	2	1.8
Foster parent	1	0.9
Guardian	1	0.9
Respondent gender		
Male	27	24.1
Female	85	75.9
Respondent age		
16-19	3	2.7
20-29	8	7.1
30-39	48	42.9
40-49	36	32.1
50-59	15	13.4
60 and older	2	1.8
Highest educational level		
Less than high school	7	6.3
High school	12	10.7
Some college	16	14.3
College	43	38.4
Graduate schools	34	30.4
Respondent ethnicity		

Asian American	94	83.9
Black or African American	3	2.7
Hispanic/Latino	8	7.1
Native American	7	6.3
Household income		
$0-$24,999	18	16.1
$25,000-$49,999	19	17
$50,000-$74,999	15	13.4
$75,000-$99,999	24	21.4
$100,000 and up	36	32.1
Child gender		
Male	81	72.3
Female	31	27.7
Child age		
0-4	20	17.9
5 to 10	57	50.9
11 to 13	13	11.6
14-18	10	8.9
19 and older	12	10.7
Child diagnosis		
Autism	56	50
Multiple disabilities	18	16
Other health impairment	10	8.9
Emotional disturbance	9	8
Speech and language impairment	6	5.4
Deafness	4	3.6
Intellectual disability	4	3.6
Visual impairment	2	1.8
Specific learning disability	1	0.9
Hearing impairment	1	0.9
Traumatic brain injury	1	0.9
States respondent lived in		
Alabama	1	0.9
Alaska	1	0.9
Arizona	6	5.4
Arkansas	1	0.9
California	31	27.7
Connecticut	3	2.7
Florida	4	3.6
Hawaii	1	0.9
Illinois	3	2.7

Massachusetts	2	1.8
Minnesota	1	0.9
Nebraska	1	0.9
New Jersey	1	0.9
New Mexico	4	3.6
New York	37	33
North Carolina	3	2.7
Ohio	1	0.9
Oregon	1	0.9
South Carolina	1	0.9
Texas	6	5.4
Washington	3	2.7

Note. $N = 112$.

Setting

Participants completed the online survey at their homes. After answering the questions, they received an email with a $10 e-gift card code.

Procedures

Data collection

I contacted the non-profit family centers and communicated with the center directors for recruitment of potential participation in this study via email. Once the center directors were committed to helping recruit the participants, I sent them an email with a cover letter explaining the purpose and procedure of the study. In the cover letter, there was a link for the online survey which included an introduction letter, a consent form, and the questionnaire. Two center directors invited me to post the cover letter and the survey link to their Facebook pages.

Data were collected by using a 47-item online parent involvement survey in October and November, 2015. The survey took about 15-20 minutes to complete. I sent a second reminder of the survey completion four weeks after the first notification email was sent. The time frame for the online survey was 1.5 months. The first 120 respondents

each received a $10 e-gift card once they completed the survey online. A total of 132 responses were received initially. After invalid and duplicate responses were screened and eliminated (e.g., incomplete responses, respondents identified themselves as Caucasian or White, a group not the target population in this research study), 112 valid responses were included in data analysis.

Consent form

The consent form approved by the University of New Mexico Institutional Review Board was imbedded into the online survey. After the potential participants read the introduction letter, the next section was the online consent form. If they agreed to participate in the study, they clicked on the "Yes, I would like to participate" button and were redirected to the survey questions. If they did not agree to participate, they then clicked on the "No, I do not want to participate" button and were exited from the survey questions.

Measure

An online survey (Appendix A) was developed with a Google form for this study. Questions were adapted from the previous literature (School Quality Working Group, 2014; Walkers et al., 2005). I first emailed the survey link to two professional experts who had a computer science background to ensure there were no technical issues for potential participants to respond to the online survey using different devices. The areas that were tested included the use of different internet browsers and/or different devices such as smart phones, tablets, laptops, and desktops to enter the survey data. The test did not reveal any technical problems. The 47-questions online survey included five sections: demographic information, Role Activity Beliefs, Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping the

Child Succeed in School, Parents' Involvement in Home-Based and School-Based Activities, and School Climate.

Demographic Information

There were 11 questions in the demographic information section regarding the parent participants and their children with disabilities. For parents who had more than one child with disabilities, they could choose one child as the target child to answer all the questions. With regard to respondents who had more than one ethnicity, there was an option under ethnicity as "other" for them to choose and type in their responses accordingly. The questions included respondent gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, family income, education level, geographic location, relationship to the child, child age, gender, and disability category.

Role Activity Beliefs

This section was adapted from the *Parent Role Construction for Involvement in Child's Education Survey* (Walkers et al., 2005). A total of 10 questions were asked to measure the parents' perception of their roles in involvement in their children's special education (e.g., "I believe it is my responsibility to volunteer at the school' and "I believe it is my responsibility to help my child with homework.") The reliability coefficient was .80 (Walkers et al., 2005). The response format was as follows: 1 = disagree very strongly; 2 = disagree; 3 = disagree just a little; 4 = agree just a little; 5 = agree; 6 = agree very strongly. The total score was the sum of the rating of these 10 questions. In this current study, the Cronbach's alpha of Role Activity Beliefs was .86.

Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School

This section was adopted from the *Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School Survey* (Walkers et al., 2005). A total of seven questions were asked to measure parents' perceptions of their abilities in the involvement in their children's special education (e.g., "I know how to help my child do well in school" and "I know I'm getting through to my child.") The reliability coefficient was .78 (Walkers et al., 2005). The response format was as follows: 1 = disagree very strongly; 2 = disagree; 3 = disagree just a little; 4 = agree just a little; 5 = agree; 6 = agree very strongly. The total score was the sum of the rating of these 7 questions. The Cronbach's alpha of Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School based on the data collected for this study was .81.

Parents' Involvement in Home-Based and School-Based Activities

This section was adapted from the *Parents' Involvement in Home-Based and School-Based Activities Survey* (Walkers et al., 2005). A total of 10 questions were asked to measure the parents' self-reported behaviors of involvement in their children's education. The first five questions were related to the home-based involvement activities (e.g., "Someone in this family talks with this child about the school day" and "Someone in this family supervises this child's homework.") The reliability coefficient of home-based activity was .85 (Walkers et al., 2005). The latter five questions were related to the school-based involvement activities. (e.g., "Someone in this family helps out at this child's school" and "Someone in this family attends special events at school.") The reliability coefficient of school-based activity was .82 (Walker et al., 2005). The response format was as follows: 1 = never; 2 = 1-2 times this year; 3 = 4-5 times this year; 4 = once a week; 5 = a few times a week; 6 = daily. A subtotal score of home-based activities

was generated by summing up the rating for five questions. Next, a subtotal score of school-based activities was calculated by adding the rating of five questions. The total score of parental involvement activity was calculated by combining these two subtotal scores. For the current study, the Cronbach's alpha was .77 for the home-based activity and .80 for the school-based activity.

School Climate

Questions from this section were adapted from the *Climate Survey* (School Quality Working Group, 2014). A total of eight items were designed to measure parents' perception of the attitudes of school staff and how that relates to their involvement in school activities (e.g., "This school makes me feel welcome whenever I visit" and "This school promotes good relationships with parents/families.") The reliability coefficient was not reported according to the School Quality Working Group. The response format was as follows: 1 = disagree very strongly; 2 = disagree; 3 = disagree just a little; 4 = agree just a little; 5 = agree; 6 = agree very strongly. The total score was the sum of the rating of each question. The Cronbach's alpha of school climate for this study was .93.

Data Analytical Plan

Once participants submitted the survey online, the Google form generated a Microsoft Excel workbook for all the data collected online. Next, data were imported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Preliminary analysis was conducted.

RQ1. What are the levels of parental involvement (i.e. beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, home-based and school-based activities, and school climate)?

To answer the first research question, I conducted a descriptive analysis to report the level of parental involvement from four aspects, beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, home- and school-based activities, and school climate. Means and standard deviations and range for each ethnic group were reported. In addition, independent samples *t* tests were performed examining differences on beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, home-based and school-based involvement, and school climate between (1) parents with higher education levels (i.e., with a bachelor degree) and lower education levels (i.e., without a bachelor degree), (2) parents who were married and parents who were single, and (3) parents whose annual incomes were higher than federal poverty level of a family of four (i.e., $26,000) and those who earned less than that.

RQ 2: To what extent did marital status, parental education level, and income predict parental involvement?

To answer this research question, I conducted a multiple regression to examine how the independent variables (i.e., marital status, parental education level, and income) predicted the dependent variable (i.e., parent involvement).

RQ3. To what extent did marital status, parent educational level, and income, beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, and school climate predict parental involvement in home-based and school-based activities?

Three hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the extent to which parental education level, marital status, income, beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, and school climate predicted combined home- and school-based involvement, home-based involvement, and school-based involvement while controlling for ethnicity. Fishman and Nickerson (2015) adapted and tested the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's

model of the parental involvement process controlling for ethnicity. Thus, in this current study, ethnicity was included as a controlled variable. The independent variables were parental education level, marital status, income, perception about school climate, belief of roles in parental involvement, and parental perception of self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school. The dependent variables were combined home- and school-based involvement, home-based involvement, and school-based involvement.

First, the control variable (i.e., ethnicity) was entered into Block 1. Next, the independent variables (i.e., marital status, income, and educational levels) were entered in Block 2 after controlling for ethnicity. Then beliefs in roles and self-efficacy were entered in Block 3 after controlling for the four factors, followed by school climate in Block 4 after controlling for all the six factors entered in Block 3. The sequential order of how predictors were entered into the blocks was determined by the relative importance of the selected predictors (Cohen, 2001) and was guided by the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model (2005). Research has shown that parents' socioeconomic status (e.g., income, parental education and jobs), ethnicity, and marital status might play a role in determining their level of involvement (Green et al, 2007; Hornby and Lafaele, 2011; Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Wang et al., 2016). In addition, parental perception of self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school and their belief of roles in parental involvement affected parents' level of involvement (Walker et al., 2005). Parents' perceptions of school climate also significantly influenced their involvement in children's education (Seefeldt et al., 1998).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

Chapter 4 presents preliminary analysis results and major findings of the study. Barriers to parental involvement in children's special education prevent parents of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds from engaging in their children's home-based and school-based activities. Parental involvement in this study is defined as parental beliefs of roles in parental involvement, parental perceptions of self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school, home-based and school-based activities, and school climate (e.g., how parents feel welcome by the school staff). The current study was to examine parental involvement in their children's special education.

Preliminary Analysis

Correlation analyses were conducted for key variables to explore whether the independent variables were associated with dependent variables, and whether independent variables were highly correlated with each other (see Table 2). No issue of multicollinearity emerged. Results indicated that parents' education levels were positively correlated with self-efficacy and parents' beliefs in roles, $r(110) = .26$ and $r(110) = .45$, respectively, *ps.* $< .01$. Income was significantly correlated with parents' beliefs in roles and school climate, $r(110) = .23$ and $r(110) = .26$, respectively, *ps* $< .01$. Marital status was significantly correlated with school climate, $r(110) = -.19$. Parents who were single felt less welcome by schools than married couples. Results also suggested beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, and school climate were significantly correlated with the total score of home-based and school-based activities $r(110) = .44$, $r(110) = .42$, and

$r(110) = .41$, respectively, $ps < .01$. However, participants' education level had a week positive correlation with the total score of home-based and school-based activities, $r(110) = .21$, $p < .01$.

Beliefs in roles and self-efficacy were significantly positively correlated, $r(110) = .67$, $p < .01$. School climate also had a statistically significant moderate to strong positive linear relationship with parents' beliefs in roles, $r(110) = .64$, $p < .01$. Self-efficacy was significantly correlated with school climate, $r(110) = .64$, $p < .01$.

Table 2

Correlations for Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Home- and school-based activities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Beliefs in roles	.44**	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Self-efficacy	.42**	.67**	-	-	-	-	-
4. School climate	.41**	.64**	.64**	-	-	-	-
5. Income	.11	.23*	.05	.26**	-	-	-
6. Education levels	.21**	.45**	.26**	.38**	.47**	-	-
7. Marital status[a]	-.18	-.14	-.11	-.19*	-.24**	-.10	-

Note. N =112. [a]Married = 1, Single = 2.

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.; two-tailed.

Research Question 1: What are the levels of parental involvement (i.e. beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, home-based and school-based activities, and school climate)?

Means, standard deviations, and range of beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, parent involvement in home-based and school-based activities, and school climate for each ethnic group were analyzed to examine the level of parental involvement among different ethnic groups (see Table 3).

Beliefs in Roles

The average score of parents' beliefs in roles in parental involvement across four ethnic groups was 47.71 (*SD* = 7.54, *Range* = 10 – 60). The average score of parents' beliefs in their roles in parental involvement among Asian Americans was 48.80 (*SD* = 5.90, *Range* = 27 – 60). The average score of parents' beliefs in their roles in parental involvement among African Americans was 25.00 (*SD* = 13.08, *Range* = 12 – 34). The average score of parents' beliefs in their roles in parental involvement among Hispanic Americans was 48.38 (*SD* = 8.38, *Range* = 32 – 59). The average score of parents' beliefs in their roles in parental involvement among Native Americans was 42.00 (*SD* = 8.21, *Range* = 32 – 53 (see Table 3).

Self-Efficacy

The average score of parental perceptions of self-efficacy for helping their child in education across different ethnic groups was 28.68 (*SD* = 5.83, *Range* = 10 – 42). The average score of parental perceptions of self-efficacy for helping their child in education among Asian Americans was 29.48 (*SD* = 5.53, *Range* = 29 – 42). The average score of parental perceptions of self-efficacy for helping their child in education in education among African Americans was 17.33 (*SD* = 6.43, *Range* = 10 – 22). The average score of

parental perceptions of self-efficacy for helping their child in education among Hispanic Americans was 25.13 (*SD* = 3.80, *Range* = 19 – 29). The average score of parental perceptions of self-efficacy for helping their child in education among Native Americans was 26.86 (*SD* = 5.43, *Range* = 20 – 34 (see Table 3).

Home-based and School-based Activities

Across 112 respondents, the average score of home-based activities that parents were involved in was 18.95 (*SD* = 5.53, *Range* = 4 – 25). Next, a more specific breakdown analysis between groups was conducted to examine the differences of each ethnic group. Within Asian Americans, the average score of home-based activities was 19.69 (*SD* = 4.94, *Range* = 4 – 25). Within African Americans, the average score of home-based activities was 6.00 (*SD* = 1.73, *Range* = 4 – 7). Within Hispanic Americans, the average score of home-based activities was 17.50 (*SD* = 5.83, *Range* = 5 – 25). Within Native Americans, the average score of home-based activities was 16.14 (*SD* = 6.57, *Range* = 8 – 25 (see Table 3).

The average score of school-based activities was 8.83 (*SD* = 5.49, *Range* = 0 – 25). The average score of school-based activities for Asian Americans was 8.72 (*SD* = 5.65, *Range* = 0 – 25). The average score of school-based activities for African Americans was 9.67 (*SD* = 6.66, *Range* = 4 – 17). The average score of school-based activities for Hispanic Americans was 9.63 (*SD* = 2.39, *Range* = 7 – 13). The average score of school-based activities for Native Americans was 9.00 (*SD* = 6.33, *Range* = 2 – 20 (see Table 3).

School Climate

The average score of parents' perceptions of school staff's attitudes (e.g., the level of school welcoming parents to be involved in their children's education) across different ethnic groups was 35.14 (*SD* = 8.05, *Range* = 9 – 48). The average score of parents' perceptions of school staff's attitudes among Asian Americans was 36.44 (*SD* = 6.99, *Range* = 14 – 48). The average score of parents' perceptions of school staff's attitudes among African Americans was 18.67 (*SD* = 8.74, *Range* = 9 – 26). The average score of parents' perceptions of school staff's attitudes among Hispanic Americans were 33.38 (*SD* = 7.19, *Range* = 19 – 43). The average score of parents' perceptions of school staff's attitudes among Native Americans was 26.86 (*SD* = 10.51, *Range* = 10 – 40 (see Table 3).

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Survey Subscales

Ethnicity	*N*	*M*	*SD*	Range
Parental beliefs in their roles of involvement				
Asian American	94	48.8	5.86	27-60
Black or African American	3	25.00	13.08	10-34
Hispanic/Latino	8	48.38	8.38	32-59
Native American	7	42.00	8.21	32-53
Total	112	47.71	7.54	10-60
Parental perception of self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school				
Asian American	94	29.48	5.53	17-42
Black or African American	3	17.33	6.43	10-22
Hispanic/Latino	8	25.13	3.8	19-29
Native American	7	26.86	5.43	20-34
Total	112	28.68	5.83	10-42

Home-based activities				
Asian American	94	19.69	4.94	4-25
Black or African American	3	6.00	1.73	4-7
Hispanic/Latino	8	17.50	5.83	5-25
Native American	7	16.14	6.57	8-25
Total	112	18.95	5.53	4-25
School-based activities				
Asian American	94	8.72	5.65	0-25
Black or African American	3	9.67	6.66	4-17
Hispanic/Latino	8	9.63	2.39	7-13
Native American	7	9.00	6.33	2-20
Total	112	8.83	5.49	0-25
School climate				
Asian American	94	36.44	6.99	14-48
Black or African American	3	18.67	8.74	9-26
Hispanic/Latino	8	33.38	7.19	19-43
Native American	7	26.86	10.51	10-40
Total	112	35.14	8.05	9-48

Note. N = 112. M = mean. SD = standard deviation.

As shown in Table 4, the independent samples t test results indicated that parents with lower education levels had lower beliefs in their roles to support their children compared to those with higher levels of education, $t(110) = -2.9$, p = .01, Cohen's d = .64. Parents with lower education levels reported less confident in their own capacities to support their children compared to those with higher educational levels, $t(110) = -2.01$, p = .05, Cohen's d = .39. Parents with lower education levels reported feeling less welcomed by schools compared to those with higher education levels, $t(110) = -3.05$, p

< .01, Cohen's *d* = .66. Single parents reported being less involved in home-based activities compared to married couples, $t(110) = 2.23$, $p < .05$, Cohen's *d* = .53.

Table 4

Independent Samples t Test Results for the Survey Subscales

Variable	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*	95%CI *LL*	95%CI *UL*	Cohen's *d*
Beliefs in role								
College and under	35	44.26	9.39	-2.90	.01	-8.49	-1.54	.64
Bachelor and higher	77	49.27	5.97					
Self-efficacy								
College and under	35	27.06	6.55	-2.01	.05	-4.68	-.03	.39
Bachelor and higher	77	29.42	5.36					
School climate								
College and under	35	31.46	9.33	-3.05	.00	-8.89	-1.83	.66
Bachelor and higher	77	36.82	6.83					
Home-based activity								
Married	89	19.53	5.48	2.23	.03	.31	5.35	.53
Single	23	16.70	5.27					

Note. **p* < .05. ***p* < .01.

Research Question 2: To what extent did marital status, parent educational level, and income predict parental involvement?

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which independent variables (i.e., marital status, parental education levels, and income) predicted the dependent variable (i.e., parental involvement). The three predictors

explained 18% of the variance of parental involvement, $F(3, 108) = 9.32$, $p < .01$, $\Delta R^2 = .18$. Marital status significantly predicted parental involvement, $\beta = -.21$, $SE = 2.12$, $p < .05$. Married couples were more involved in their child's education compared to single parents. Parental education levels significantly predicted parental involvement, $\beta = .40$, $SE = 1.76$, $p < .01$. Parents with higher educational levels involved more in their children's education compared to those with lower educational levels (see Table 5).

Table 5

Multiple Regression Results for Parental Involvement (i.e., Beliefs in Roles, Self-Efficacy, Home-based and School-based Involvement, and School Climate)

Variable	Parental Involvement		
	B	*SE B*	*β*
Constant	105.72	9.72	
Income	-.23	1.69	-.01
Parental education level	7.25	1.76	.40**
Marital status[a]	-4.99	2.12	-.21*
R^2			.21
F			9.32**
ΔR^2			.18

Note. $N = 112$. [a]Married = 1, Single = 2.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Research Question 3: To what extent did marital status, parent educational level, income, beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, and school climate predict parental involvement in home-based and school-based activities?

A series of three hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to examine the extent to which independent variables (i.e., marital status, parental education levels, income, beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, and school climate) predicted the dependent variables (i.e., combined home-and school-based activities, home-based, and school-based activities). The independent variables were entered into the blocks following the models described in the previous studies (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Green et al., 2007; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Combined Home-Based and School-Based Involvement

The first model accounting for ethnicity was not significant. Model 2 using income, parental education levels, and marital status to predict the total score of home-based and school-based activities involvement was also not significant. Model 3 adding beliefs in roles and self-efficacy was statistically significant and explained 20% of the variance in the combined home-based and school-based involvement with an additional 16% change of variance from Model 2 to Model 3, $F(6, 105) = 5.49$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .20$. Beliefs in roles ($\beta = .27$, $SE = .14$, $p < .05$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = .23$, $SE = .17$, $p = .052$) contributed in the positive directions. The final model adding school climate was statistically significant and explained 20% of the variance with an additional 1% change of variance from Model 3 to Model 4, $F(7, 104) = 4.90$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .20$. However, in the final model, none of the predictors had an impact on the combined home-based and school-based activities due to inadequate increase of statistic power (R^2 change = .01) from Model 3 to Model 4 with the addition of remaining predictors ($p > .05$) (see Table 6).

Table 6

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results for Combined Home-Based and School-Based Involvement

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*
Constant	29.43	1.50		25.89	4.64		5.64	6.08		5.07	6.09	
Ethnicity	-.12	.93	-.12	-.77	.95	-.08	.21	.89	.02	.38	.90	.04
Income				-.22	.66	-.04	.03	.62	.01	-.05	.62	-.01
Parent education				1.31	.68	.20	.12	.68	.02	.05	.68	.01
Marital status[a]				-3.23	2.04	-.15	-2.54	1.88	-.12	-2.38	1.88	-.11
Beliefs in roles							.31	.14	.27*	.26	.15	.23
Self-efficacy							.34	.17	.23*	.26	.19	.18
School climate										.15	.13	.14
ΔR^2			.01			.04			.20**			.20**
R Square Change			.02			.06			.16**			.01

Note. $N = 112$. [a]Married = 1, Single = 2.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Home-Based Involvement

The first model accounting for ethnicity was significant. The second model (Model 2) accounting for parental education level, income, and marital status after controlling for ethnicity contributed significant to home-based involvement and explained 15% of the variance in home-based involvement, $F(4, 107) = 5.70$, $p < .01$, $\Delta R^2 = .15$. Specifically, parental education level significant predicted home-based involvement, $\beta = .33$, $SE = .41$, $p < .01$. Model 3 added beliefs in roles and self-efficacy controlling for ethnicity, marital status, and SES factors. It was significant and explained 33% of the variance with an additional 19% change of variance from Model 2 to Model 3, $F(6, 105) = 10.22$, $p < .01$, $\Delta R^2 = .33$. Specifically, beliefs in roles was significant at this level to predict home-based involvement, $\beta = .48$, $SE = .08$, $p < .001$. However, the inclusion of these two variables might suppress the effects of parental educational level as it became non-significant. The final model (Model 4) added school climate controlling for the six factors. It was significant and accounted for 34% of the total variance with an additional 1% change of variance from Model 3 to Model 4, $F(7, 104) = 9.13$, $p < .01$, $\Delta R^2 = .34$. Beliefs in roles was again a significant predictor of parent involvement at home, $\beta = .43$, $SE = .09$, $p < .001$ (see Table 7).

Table 7

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results for Home-Based Involvement

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*
Constant	20.91	.95		15.45	2.84		1.23	3.58		.80	3.58	
Ethnicity	-1.44	.59	-.23*	-.1.07	.58	-.17	-.44	.53	-.07	-.31	.53	.05
Income				-.13	.41	-.03	-.06	.36	-.02	-.12	.36	-.03
Parent education				1.36	.41	.33**	.45	.40	.11	.40	.40	.10
Marital status[a]				-2.02	1.25	-.15	-1.56	-1.11	-.11	-1.45	1.11	-.11
Beliefs in roles							.35	.08	.48**	.32	.09	.43**
Self-efficacy							.04	.10	.04	-.02	.11	-.02
School climate										.11	.08	.16
ΔR^2			.04*			.15**			.33**			.34**
R Square Change			.05*			.18**			.19**			.01

Note. $N = 112$. [a]Married = 1, Single = 2. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$

School-Based Involvement

Following the same procedures to conduct hierarchical multiple regression analyses, none of the models was significant.

Summary

The results of the study indicated that marital status and parental education levels significantly predicted the level of parental involvement (beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, home-based and school-based activities, and school climate). Married couple were involved more in their children's education than single parents. Parents with higher education levels involved more in their children's education than those with lower education levels.

Findings of this study also indicated that parental education level had a positive impact on parental involvement in combined home- and school-based activities. The higher education CLD parents received, the higher level of combined home-based and school-based activities involvement parents had. Next, parents' perceptions of themselves as having a helping role in the combined home-based educational activities and school-based activities were crucial. In other words, the more parents believed they played an imperative role in supporting their children's education, the more time they would devote to the home- and school-based educational activities with their children. Moreover, parents' perceptions of their own capacities of helping their children succeed in school played an important part in their involvement in combined home-based and school-based activities. Beliefs in roles found significant as a predictor to the level of parents' involvement in home-based activities. The next chapter contains the discussion of these results, the implications of this study, limitations of this study, and conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This final chapter presents discussion of the most prominent findings of this study, the implications for practices, recommendations for future research, limitations of the present study, and conclusions. This study examined (1) the levels of parental involvement among parents from different ethnic groups, (2) the extent to which parental education level, income, and marital status predicted parental involvement in their children's education, and (3) the extent to which the personal and contextual factors, along with parental education level, income, and marital status predicted parental involvement in home-based and school-based activities.

The first major finding of the study suggested that parent involvement in home-based activities was more frequent than in school-based activities among parents from CLD backgrounds. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Green et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2001).

One of the strengths of this study was that it adapted several measures published in previous literature (School Quality Working Group, 2014; Walkers et al., 2005) to create an online survey specifically to answer the research questions. Five sections were included in the survey: demographic information, Role Activity Beliefs, Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School, Parents' Involvement in Home-Based and School-Based Activities, and School Climate.

Parental involvement in education has been shown to be an influential factor directly related to students' academic performance (Catsro et al., 2015; Horvat et al.,

2003; Jeynes et al., 2016). When parents devote more time and effort into being involved in their children's education, their children demonstrate better academic achievement outcomes (Epstein, 2001a; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Henderson et al., 2007; Jeynes, et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2016). However, parents from CLD backgrounds have reported encountering barriers and challenges such as communication issues, power imbalance, language barriers, and lack of time while engaging in their children's education (Brandon et al., 2010; Butera, 2005; Garcia & Guerra., 2004; Harry et al., 2005; Ju et al., 2018; Kummerer & Lopez-Reyna, 2009; Landmark et al. 2007; Ratcliff & Hunt, 2009). While much is known about the challenges parents from CLD backgrounds faced in their involvement in their children's special education, the factors that predicted parental involvement among CLD families remained unknown. This study addressed the gap in the literature by investigating the factors influencing CLD parents' level of involvement in their children's special education.

Factors Predicting Parent Involvement

Several researchers found the parental education level, marital status, and socioeconomic status had impacts on the level of parental involvement in the education process (Anderson, 2000; Epstein, 1995; Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Green et al., 2007; Waanders et al., 2007). Findings from this study suggested that marital status was a significant predictor of parents' level of involvement, such that married parents tended to involve more in their children's education than single parents. This finding is consistent with previous research (Ritblatt et al., 2002). When parents have higher levels of education, they have a tendency to have better interactions with their children through proximal processes in the immediate environment (Wang et al., 2016). This study also

suggested that parents' education level was a significant predictor of parental involvement. This finding is consistent with the previous studies (Wang et al., 2016; Waanders et al., 2007). However, income was not a significant predictor in this current study, which is not consistent with previous research (Ritblatt et al., 2002). In this study, the sample was predominantly parents from middle- and high-income families. This might explain income did not contribute to predicting the level of parental involvement.

Factors Predicting Combined Home-based and School-based Involvement

One major finding of the study suggested that parental education levels predicted the combined home-based and school-based involvement. When parents have higher levels of education, they are more likely to participate in school-based activities. In Bronfenbrenner's bioecological system theory (2005), a person's resources could initiate and/or sustain the proximal processes which implied the interactions between parents and child at home and at school. Parents' education level is considered resources in this theory, allowing CLD parents to actively participate in their children's special education both at home and at school.

The second major finding indicated that parents' beliefs in roles and self-efficacy predicted the level of parent involvement in combined home-based and school-based activities. Specifically, the more important parents perceived their roles in helping their children with disabilities in education, the higher the level of parental involvement in their children's education. In addition, they would also participate more in educational activities to increase the experiences of proximal processes when they had stronger beliefs in their capacities of supporting their children's education. The findings of this study support previous research (Green et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2005; Waanders et al.,

2007) that indicated the parental perception of self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school and their belief in roles in parental involvement played important roles in parental involvement.

Finally, findings from this study did not suggest school climate as a predictor contributing to the combined home-based and school-based involvement. This is not consistent to Seefeldt et al. (1998) suggested that the perception of school climate significantly influenced parental involvement in children's education. Fishman and Nickerson (2015) tested Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model of parental involvement (2005). School climate is conceptualized as general school invitations, specific teacher invitations, and specific child invitations. Fishman and Nickerson found that general school invitations had a positive impact on home-based involvement whereas specific teacher invitations did not have a significant impact on either home-or school-based involvement. In Green et al.'s study (2007), specific teacher invitations were a significant predictor of parental involvement in of school-based activities. It is worth noting Green et al.'s study (2007) did not include participants of children with disabilities while Fishman and Nickerson (2015) included predominantly European American participants of children with disabilities.

Home-based Involvement

The results indicated that CLD parents' education levels had a significant impact on their level of home-based involvement. This finding is inconsistent with previous research (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015). In their study, parents' education level only had a significant impact on the school-based activity. Fishman and Nickerson attributed this to conflicting teacher-parent perceptions. For example, teachers reported that parents with

low SES tended not to value education and sometimes were hard to reach (Davies, 1993, as cited in Fishman & Nickerson, 2015). It was possible that CLD parents had different definitions of parental involvement and tended to involve more in home-based activities than school-based activities. However, it is worth noting that in Fishman and Nickerson's study, the majority of participants were European American parents whereas in this study, 100% of the participants were from CLD backgrounds.

It is worth noting that when other variables such as beliefs in roles, self-efficacy, and school climate were entered in the models, parental education level was no longer a significant predictor of home-based involvement. This could be explained by the complexity of proximal processes occurring in parents' daily lives. It is possible that parents' perceived life context including time and energy might play a role in parental involvement. Future research may test Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's complete model of parental involvement, which includes three levels: parents' motivation, general invitations from others, and perceived life context.

Beliefs in roles was an influential factor predicting home-based involvement. When parents had stronger beliefs in themselves as a helping role to support their children in education, they had higher levels of involvement in home-based activities. This finding is consistent with previous literature (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Green et al., 2007).

Self-efficacy did not significantly predict home-based involvement although it had significantly predicted combined home-based and school-based involvement. However, beliefs in roles played a more important role to predict home-based involvement (β = .48., p < .01) than combined home-based and school-based involvement

(β = .27., p < .05) when self-efficacy did not have any statistic power to predict home-based involvement. Previous research scrutinizing Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model of involvement did not include combined home-based and school-based involvement as the outcome. More research is needed to further examine to what extent self-efficacy predicts combined home-based and school-based involvement in addition to home-based involvement.

This study did not find school climate had any impact on home-based involvement. This is not consistent to Fisherman and Nickerson (2015) who suggested general school invitations was an influential factor in home-based involvement. It is possible that CLD parents tend to become involved in home-based activities regardless whether they viewed schools and staff having welcoming attitudes or not.

School-based Involvement

The current study did not find any significant predictor of school-based involvement. This is inconsistent to Fisherman and Nickerson (2015) who indicated parental educational level and role activity beliefs positively influenced school-based involvement. It is noteworthy, all four groups of parents from CLD backgrounds in the current study reported being less involved in school-based activities than home-based activities. Previous research indicated CLD parents hesitated in participating in school related education activities due to physical, financial, emotional, language and communication barriers, as well as conflicts of cultural beliefs (Brandon et al., 2010; Butera, 2005; Garcia & Guerra, 2004; Harry et al., 2005; Kummerer & Lopez-Reyna, 2009; Ratcliff & Hunt, 2009). For example, Lai and Ishiyama (2004) conducted a qualitative research study interviewing ten Chinese immigrant parents of children with

disabilities to understand their level of involvement in their children's education. In their study, parents reported difficulties in communicating with school teachers and other related professionals not only because of their language barriers but also because of teachers' devaluation of parental inputs and traditional beliefs. These barriers prevented them from communicating with their children's teachers and engaging in school-based activities.

Thompson (2014) interviewed eight African American parents of male students with special needs to explore the barriers that prevented them from being involved in their children's special education. In Thompson's study, parents reported that three main factors distanced themselves from participating in IEP meetings and decision making: teachers' poor communication skills, frustration at the negative interactions with teachers and school staff, and distrust of the school system to provide equitable education to their children. Thompson (2014) further described that African American parents felt disrespected by school personnel due to lack of explicit explanations about the services and the programs their children would receive. Moreover, teachers' negative perceptions of African American parents' practices also made these parents feel unwelcome and led them to further distance themselves from participating in their children's school-based events such as IEP meetings and decision-making processes.

Implications

Parent involvement is one of the central elements of IDEA (Harry, 2008). Some researchers focused on the outcomes of parent involvement for students in general, while others emphasized barriers to effective parent involvement. The studies reviewed in Chapter Two examined barriers might prevent CLD families from actively participating

in their children's special education as well as factors influencing parents' level of involvement. These barriers included limited English proficiency, transportation problems, time conflict, lack of babysitting, cultural differences in the definitions of disability and parent involvement, absence of a welcoming atmosphere at school, the frequent use of jargon, and teachers' reluctant attitudes (Harry et al., 1995; Hughes et al;, 2002, 2008; Lynch & Stein, 1982; Lynch & Stein, 1987; Sontag & Schacht, 1994; Stein, 1983; Torres-Burgo et al, 1999).

Parents' perceptions of their roles in helping children were a significant predictor to combined home-based and school-based activities. While examining its influence on home-based or school-based activities separately, the study indicated beliefs in roles had a greater impact on home-based involvement than school-based activities. In this current study, parents' perceptions of their own capacity to support their children in education had a significant effect on parents' involvement in their children's combined home-and school-based activities. Future research should investigate the insights from parents on how they perceive their own capacities in their involvement in both home-and school-based activities.

NCLB (2002) and ESSA (2015) emphasized on local educational agencies providing parent trainings to increase parental involvement. CLD parents of children with disabilities had called for meaningful parent education to support them in understanding the special education system and services (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Ju et al., 2018; Lynch and Stein, 1987; Torres-Burgo et al., 1999). Schools can provide trainings to CLD parents to assist them in gaining knowledge and skills to be able to participate in their children's education. Parents' perceptions of themselves as a helping can be included as a

part of parent education program. With the provision of education on parenting skills, child development, academic activities that can be executed at home, as well as educational policies and regulations, CLD parents would feel more confident in their own capacities on involving their children's education.

It is highly recommended for school administrators and staff to work with cultural community groups and recruit staff from CLD backgrounds to increase understanding of families of children with disabilities from CLD backgrounds. Schools can provide trainings to both school personnel and teachers on strategies to encourage parents involving in home-based or school-based activities. Moreover, schools can provide transportation, child care, and incentives to increase the attendance of parent trainings or parent education programs. In this current study, marital status was a significant predictor to affect parent involvement in general. With the provision of child care and incentives, single parents might be able to attend the trainings or involve in their children's education.

Numerous studies have indicated that positive parent-teacher relationships can support children's academic and behavioral outcomes. These relationships can be strengthened through positive parent-teacher communication (Garbacz et al., 2016). Teacher preparation programs should focus on providing effective communication strategies to pre-service and in-service teachers, which reflect on marital status, parental education levels, and socioeconomic status.

This current study did not find any significant factors predicting school-based involvement. Further research is needed to re-examine whether these predictors influence the level of school-based involvement in a larger sample of parents from CLD

backgrounds. More research is needed so that the inconsistent findings regarding the associations between the demographic predictors (i.e., income, parental education levels, and marital status), beliefs in roles, and self-efficacy, and parental involvement in home-based and school-based activities in the literature can be better explained.

It is imperative to employ mixed method research to obtain "an authentic understanding of families' perspectives" (Harry, 2008, p. 382). Mixed-methods research can allow researchers to gather insights of parents' perceptions, struggles, and challenges to participate in their children's school activities. Even though surveys can provide a broad view of families' perspectives, researchers still will not be able to know the reasons behind their views or the process of how they are formed. Qualitative research can yield more in-depth and rich data to supplement the survey data, providing researchers a more comprehensive picture of the challenges of parents from CLD backgrounds. Moreover, Coll and her colleagues (2002) recommended the importance of examining the factors associated not only with group differences but with individual differences within groups. Future research should consider using a combination of research methodologies to best understand both group differences and individual differences among families of children with disabilities from different cultures.

Fishman and Nickerson (2015) adapted Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model (2005) of parent involvement and examined involvement in special education as an outcome. In this current study, special education involvement was not included as one of the dependent variables. Future research should include special education involvement as one of the dependent variables of parents' level of involvement for parents from CLD backgrounds. Future research should consider including more items in the survey to

measure the types, amount, and frequency of home-based and school-based involvement. In this current study, there were only five items in each of the home-based and school-based measures. Regarding language versions of survey instruments, it is important to provide the survey in parents' primary language. Future studies should provide the survey in participants' primary to encourage participation. It is also important to conduct a focus group and a pilot study to refine the survey questions to increase validity (Fink, 2003).

Limitation of this Study

Several limitations of the present study emerged. First, Asian American participants were overly represented in this study. The original design aimed to collect data from parents from CLD backgrounds with equal representations. However, the results indicated that the majority of the participants were Asian Americans. The small number of other minority groups included in this study made it difficult to conduct statistical analyses, which may lend little understanding of perspectives from these minority groups. Thus, the findings of this study could not be generalized to other CLD groups. Second, the majority of parents in this study had children with ASD. Thus, findings cannot be generalized to parents of children with other disabilities. Third, approximately 66% participants were from middle- or high-income families. This also indicated that the families who had higher SES were able to fill in the online survey without any problems. However, an online survey might be a limitation to other CLD groups with lower SES, which might prevent them from participating in the current study. The findings of this study cannot be generalized to CLD families from low SES backgrounds. Finally, the current study did not provide open-ended questions for parents to voice out their opinions and concerns, which may limit understanding of the insights of

factors influencing parents' beliefs and confidence in supporting their children in education. More in-depth information regarding how and why there were different levels of involvement of families from CLD backgrounds is needed.

In addition to the above-mentioned limitations, there are challenges of using an online survey including the low survey returning rate and small sample sizes of families from CLD backgrounds (Harry, 2008). Future research should consider using social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) to reach out to potential participants as well as conducting a virtual individual interview (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Google Team, or Zoom) to gather responses from participants. Harry (2008) stated that involving CLD families to participate in research has been a challenge (Harry, 2008). Active involvement with diverse cultural community groups may increase the participation rate.

Conclusion

The current study examined whether marital status, income, parental education levels, parents' perceptions of their roles, self-efficacy, and school climate predicted the level of parent involvement within the structure of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2005) model of parent involvement. The study adds to an understanding of the model with a specific group of participants: CLD parents of children with disabilities. The findings suggest that marital status, parental education levels, beliefs in roles, and self-efficacy influenced CLD parents' level of involvement. Schools can provide trainings to parents to increase their motivations to become involved in their child's education. Schools should provide CLD parents with *person* resources (e.g. skills and knowledge) to initiate or sustain the *proximal processes* which refer to parental involvement in their

children's education. Professional development opportunities should be provided to teachers and school staff to learn strategies to encourage parents to involve in all types of involvement activities. With the positive and encouraging school climate, this *macrosystem* can further influence the interactions between *microsystems* and *exosystems* under the bioecological model, which refers to parental involvement in education.

Appendix

The Parental Involvement Online Survey

Parent Involvement Survey

Cover letter and consent

* Required

1. Cover letter *

Dear Parents, I am Yi-Ling Lin, a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Specialties, University of New Mexico (UNM). I am conducting a survey study on investigating factors affecting parent involvement for their children with disabilities in education. I appreciate your participation in completing this online survey. Please be informed that your participation in the study is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. The information collected is confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of the study. In order to show my appreciation of your participation, I will provide a $10 target e-gift card. After your completion of the online survey, you will receive an electronic target gift card via emails. If you are interested in participating in this online survey, please check “yes”, and then you will be directed to the survey itself immediately. If you don’t want to participate in this online survey, please check “no”, and then you will be exited out of this study. I would be grateful to receive your survey responses between now and October 31, 2015. If you have any questions regarding this survey study, please feel free to contact me at (505)615-2070, or email me at yllin@unm.edu.

Mark only one oval.

- Yes, I would like to participate and receive a $10 Target gift card.
- No, I do not want to participate.

Section I

Please answer each item based on your and you child's current situation. If you have more than one child who has disabilities, please pick one child to focus on and answer questions based on the child you pick.

2. 1 *
   Current marital status.
   Mark only one oval.

   - ◯ Married
   - ◯ Divorced
   - ◯ Separated
   - ◯ Widowed
   - ◯ Single

3. 2 *

   Please describe your relationship to your child. *Mark only one oval.*

   - ◯ Mother
   - ◯ Father
   - ◯ Grandmother

- Grandfather
- Stepmother
- Stepfather
- Foster parent
- Guardian
- Other: .....

4. 3 *
   Number of children in the family.
   Mark only one oval.

   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5 or more

5. 4 *

Gender of the person who fills in this survey *Mark only one oval.*

- Male
- Female

6. 5 *

Gender of your child who has the disability *Mark only one oval.*

- Male
- Female

7. 6 *

What is your age? Mark only one oval.

- 16-19
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49

- [ ]
- [ ] 50-59
- [ ] 60 and older

8. 7 *

What is the age of your child with a disability? *Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] 0-4
- [ ] 5-10
- [ ] 11-13
- [ ] 14-18
- [ ] 19 or older

9. 8 *

What is the highest level of education you have completed? *Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Did not attend school
- [ ] Elementary school

- Middle school
- High school
- Some college
- College
- Graduate schools

10. 9 *

    What is your approximate average household income? *Mark only one oval.*

    - $0-$24,999
    - $25,000-$49,999
    - $50,000-$74,999
    - $75,000-$99,999
    - $100,000 and up

11. 10 *

    What is your race? Please choose one

or more *Check all that apply.*

- [ ] Hispanic/Latino
- [ ] Black or African-American
- [ ] Asian American
- [ ] Native American
- [ ] Other: .....

12. 11 *

What is your child's diagnosis? (Check that all applies) *Check all that apply.*

- [ ] Autism
- [ ] Deaf-blindness
- [ ] Deafness
- [ ] Emotional disturbance
- [ ] Hearing impairment
- [ ] Intellectual disability

- [ ]
- [ ] Multiple disabilities
- [ ] Orthopedic impairment
- [ ] Other health impairment
- [ ] Specific learning disability
- [ ] Speech or language impairment
- [ ] Traumatic brain injuries
- [ ] Visual impairment

13. 12 *

What state do you live now?
Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Alabama
- ◯ Alaska
- ◯ Arizona
- ◯ Arkansas
- ◯ California

- [ ] Colorado
- [ ] Connecticut
- [ ] Delaware
- [ ] Florida
- [ ] Georgia
- [ ] Hawaii
- [ ] Idaho
- [ ] Illinois
- [ ] Indiana
- [ ] Iowa
- [ ] Kansas
- [ ] Kentucky
- [ ] Louisiana
- [ ] Maine
- [ ] Maryland

- [ ] Massachusetts
- [ ] Michigan
- [ ] Minnesota
- [ ] Mississippi
- [ ] Missouri
- [ ] Montana
- [ ] Nebraska
- [ ] Nevada
- [ ] New Hampshire
- [ ] New Jersey
- [ ] New Mexico
- [ ] New York
- [ ] North Carolina
- [ ] North Dakota

- [ ] Ohio
- [ ] Oklahoma
- [ ] Oregon
- [ ] Pennsylvania
- [ ] Rhode Island
- [ ] South Carolina
- [ ] South Dakota
- [ ] Tennessee
- [ ] Texas
- [ ] Utah
- [ ] Vermont
- [ ] Virginia
- [ ] Washington
- [ ] West Virginia
- [ ] Wisconsin

Wyoming

Section II

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements.

Please think about the current school year as you

consider each statement.

(Questionnaires adapted from Walkers et al., 2005)

14. 1 *

I believe it is my responsibility to volunteer at the school. *Mark only one oval.*

Disagree very strongly

Disagree

Disagree just a little

Agree just a little

Agree

Agree very strongly

15. 2 *

I believe it is my responsibility to communicate with my child's teacher regularly. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

16. 3 *

I believe it is my responsibility to help my child with homework. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree

Agree very strongly

17. 4 *

I believe it is my responsibility to make sure the school has what it needs. *Mark only one oval.*

Disagree very strongly

Disagree

Disagree just a little

Agree just a little

Agree

Agree very strongly

18. 5 *

I believe it is my responsibility to support decisions made by the teacher. *Mark only one oval.*

Disagree very strongly

Disagree

Disagree just a little

- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

19. 6 *

I believe it is my responsibility to stay on top of things at school. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

20. 7 *

I believe it is my responsibility to explain tough assignments to my child. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly

- [ ]
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Disagree just a little
- [ ] Agree just a little
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Agree very strongly

21. 8 *

I believe it is my responsibility to talk with other parents from my child's school. *Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Disagree very strongly
- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Disagree just a little
- [ ] Agree just a little
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Agree very strongly

22. 9 *

I believe it is my responsibility to make the school better. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

23. 10 *

I believe it is my responsibility to talk with my child about the school day. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little

- Agree
- Agree very strongly

Section III

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements.

Please think about the current school year as you consider each statement. (Questionnaires adapted from Walkers et al., 2005)

24. 1 *

I know how to help my child do well in school.
Mark only one oval.

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

25. 2 *

I know I am getting through to my child.
Mark only one oval.

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

26. 3 *

I know how to help my child
make good grades in school.
Mark only one oval.

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree

Agree very strongly

27. 4 *

I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn *Mark only one oval.*

Disagree very strongly

Disagree

Disagree just a little

Agree just a little

Agree

Agree very strongly

28. 5 *

Other children have more influence on my child's grades than I do. *Mark only one oval.*

Disagree very strongly

Disagree

Disagree just a little

Agree just a little

Agree

Agree very strongly

29. 6 *

I know how to help my child learn.
Mark only one oval.

Disagree very strongly

Disagree

Disagree just a little

Agree just a little

Agree

Agree very strongly

30. 7 *

I make a significant difference in my child's school performance. *Mark only one oval.*

Disagree very strongly

- [ ] Disagree
- [ ] Disagree just a little
- [ ] Agree just a little
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Agree very strongly

Section IV

Families do many different things when they are involved in their children's education. We would like to know how true the following things are for your family. Please think about the current school year. (Questionnaires adapted from Walkers et al., 2005)

31. 1 *

Someone in this family talks with this child about the school day. *Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Never
- [ ] 1–2 times this year
- [ ] 4–5 times this year
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] A few times a week

- Daily

32. 2 *

Someone in this family supervises this child's homework. *Mark only one oval.*

- Never
- 1–2 times this year
- 4–5 times this year
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Daily

33. 3 *

Someone in this family helps this child study for tests. *Mark only one oval.*

- Never
- 1–2 times this year

- 4–5 times this year
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Daily

34. 4 *

Someone in this family practices spelling, math, or other skills with this child. *Mark only one oval.*

- Never
- 1–2 times this year
- 4–5 times this year
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Daily

35. 5 *

Someone in this family reads with this child.

Mark only one oval.

- Never
- 1–2 times this year
- 4–5 times this year
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Daily

36. 6 *

Someone in this family helps out at this child's school. *Mark only one oval.*

- Never
- 1–2 times this year
- 4–5 times this year
- Once a week
- A few times a week

- [ ]
- [ ] Daily

37. 7 *

Someone in this family attends special events at school. *Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Never
- [ ] 1–2 times this year
- [ ] 4–5 times this year
- [ ] Once a week
- [ ] A few times a week
- [ ] Daily

38. 8 *

Someone in this family volunteers to go on class field trips. *Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Never
- [ ] 1–2 times this year

- 4–5 times this year
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Daily

39. 9 *

Someone in this family attends PTA meetings. *Mark only one oval.*

- Never
- 1–2 times this year
- 4–5 times this year
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Daily

40. 10 *

Someone in this family goes to the school's open house. *Mark only one oval.*

- Never
- 1–2 times this year
- 4–5 times this year
- Once a week
- A few times a week
- Daily

Section IV

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements.

Please think about the current school year as you

consider each statement.

41. 1 *

This school makes me feel welcome whenever I visit. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little

- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

42. 2 *

This school promotes good relationships with parents/families. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

43. 3 *

This school respects and values the diversity of the parents/families in the community. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree

- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

44. 4 *

The school staff returns my phone calls and emails promptly.
Mark only one oval.

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

45. 5 *

This school communicates with me in language I can understand. *Mark only one oval.*

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree
- Agree very strongly

46. 6 *

This school makes a special effort to reach out to families who have trouble getting to school or who are uncomfortable in the school.

Mark only one oval.

- Disagree very strongly
- Disagree
- Disagree just a little
- Agree just a little
- Agree

Agree very strongly

47. 7 *

The school staff keeps me informed about how my child is doing in meeting expectations, and what she/she needs to do to meet grade level proficiency.

Mark only one oval.

Disagree very strongly

Disagree

Disagree just a little

Agree just a little

Agree

Agree very strongly

48. 8 *

This school schedules activities and events at times that I can attend. *Mark only one oval.*

Disagree very strongly

Disagree

- [ ]
- [ ] Disagree just a little
- [ ] Agree just a little
- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Agree very strongly

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