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Parental Involvement For Spanish-Speaking English Learners: Teachers' Perspectives

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PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT FOR SPANISH-SPEAKING ENGLISH LEARNERS: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

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Date

PERMISSION

Title	Parental Involvement for Spanish-Speaking English Learners: Teachers' Perspectives
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Olawumi Oluranti Salako
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ABSTRACT

The benefit of parental involvement (PI) cannot be underestimated, most specifically, the PI that operates on mutual trust and respect, and balancing of power between homes and schools. It is particularly beneficial to students who are learning English as a second language because their parents can partner with educators to close the achievement gap. However, literature has revealed that most schools have operated using the unidirectional approach in which parents and family members are being alienated from their children's education due to several factors like an imbalance of power between home and school (Cooper, 2009; Ishimaru et al., 2016). Hence, it is crucial to hear from educators, who are key agents in the practice of PI about their perceptions of Spanish-speaking English Language learners (ELLs) PI, the challenges they are encountering in their partnership with these parents, and the strategies they are implementing to accomplish equitable collaborations with parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The study uses "Equitable Collaboration" and "the six types of PI Model" as the theoretical Framework. The study adopts a qualitative research design with a basic interpretive approach. An elementary school with higher percentage of Spanish-speaking ELLs is purposely selected with sample criterion, and semi-standardized-open-ended interview responses of six ELL teachers were analyzed with the basic interpretive approach guided by an inductive analysis method. Overall, the teacher participants' practices of PI are relevant to the equitable collaboration framework to a certain degree in terms of mutual respect for parents, their welcoming strategies, an inclusive and open-door policy, literacy and empowerment programs, and the use of Spanish interpreters, etc. However, some teachers still lack understanding of some aspects of equitable collaboration, and they may need

training in supporting parents' leadership, decision-making, and advocacy, acknowledging and using parents' expertise, and their cultural capital as learning resources. Some strategies to achieve equitable collaboration were recommended.

Keywords: English Language Learners (ELLs), Parent/Parental Involvement (PI), Family Engagement, Nondominant Families, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) parents, Home-based Parental Involvement, School-based Parental Involvement.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The number of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the United States public school system is increasing daily (National Centre for Education Statistics [NCES], 2023) and it is crucial for their parents and families to be fully involved in their education because parental involvement (PI) has numerous benefits on students' academic achievement and other areas of their (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2015; Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014). Among the benefits of PI to students are: 1) school drop-out rates are reduced; 2) students' attendance is improved (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008); and 3) students' academic achievement is increased (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Hornby & Blackwell, 2018; Lazar et al., 1999; Lee & Bowen, 2006). In fact, increasing PI is one of the strategies for reducing the academic achievement gap (Lee & Bowen, 2006). Studies have also demonstrated that PI helps students to develop positive attitudes and behaviors (Turney & Kao, 2009), improves students' intrinsic motivation to learn, promotes students' self-regulatory skills, and reduces students' anxiety in learning (Vukovic et al., 2013).

The benefits of PI not only affect students but also schools, teachers, the school community (Akimoff, 1996; Christensen & Cleary, 1990; Lazar & Slostad, 1999; Mapp & Bergman, 2021; Winthrop et al., 2001); and parents (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; The National PTA, 2000). For example, PI leads to increased teacher morale and higher ratings of teachers

(The National PTA, 2000). Schools that involve parents outperform schools that do not involve parents (The National PTA, 2000).

However, despite the numerous benefits of PI, the literature suggest that the majority of ELLs' parents and families are not fully involved in their children's education because of several factors, such as their lack of English proficiency and lack of familiarity with the school system (Cooper, 2009; Ishimaru et al., 2016; Mapp & Bergman, 2021; Turney & Kao, 2009). Mapp and Bergman (2021) reported that families, particularly non-dominant parents, feel unwelcome in their children's schools because they are not necessarily heard, that educators have negative views about their expertise, and that their cultural capital is overlooked and devalued. Similarly, some other researchers also identified a lack of parity between parents/homes and teachers/schools as part of the factors preventing parents from being fully involved in their children's education (Cooper, 2009; Ishimaru et al., 2016).

Teachers' negative views of ELLs' parents being less competent and less cooperative may hinder parental involvement (Mapp & Bergman, 2021; Turney & Kao, 2009). Turney and Kao (2009) stated that immigrant parents reported more barriers to their involvement when compared to native-born parents; these reports make the immigrant parents less likely to participate in their children's education. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) conveyed that many school programs make little effort to promote ELLs' parental involvement. Also, Bower and Griff (2011) stated that "schools still struggle with how to effectively involve parents" (p. 2). Similarly, Mapp and Bergman (2021) said that "even with the acknowledgement of equitable and excellent educational opportunities for all children, federal, state and local education entities and stakeholders struggle with how to create and sustain effective family engagement strategies" (p. 3).

Because of the evidence that schools and teachers struggle with effective PI practice, I investigated six elementary teachers' perceptions of ELLs' parental involvement, their challenges practicing PI with ELLs' parents, and the strategies they used in their practice of PI with Spanish-speaking ELLs parents. The participants' responses were analyzed using the equitable collaboration framework (Ishimaru et al., 2016) and the six types of PI Model (Epstein et al., 2009).

Statement of the Problem

According to the NCES (2023), the percentage of public-school students in the United States who were English Learners (ELs) in fall 2010 was 9.2 percent, or 4.5 million students, and increased in fall 2020 to 10.3 percent, or 5.0 million students. The percentage of public-school students who were ELs ranged from 0.7 percent in West Virginia to 20.1 percent in Texas, revealing that Texas has the largest ELs.

Even though the number of ELLs continues to rise, many school programs make little effort to promote ELLs' parental involvement (PI) (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). This has led to ELLs parents and families feeling unwelcome by the school system, and not able to be fully involved in their children's education (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Bermúdez & Márquez, 1996). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) stated that "parents of ELLs face daunting barriers as they try to become informed or involved in their child's school" (p. 1). The barriers identified are ELLs parents' inability to understand English, their unfamiliarity with the school system, and differences in cultural norms and cultural capital that they perceived to limit parents' communication and participation (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Likewise, Bermúdez and Márquez (1996) said:

> Culturally and linguistically diverse families remain alienated from the school system because of a variety of circumstances, including: (a) lack of English language skills, (b) lack of understanding of the home-school partnership, (c) lack of understanding of the school system, (d) lack of confidence, (e) work interference, (f) negative past experiences with schools, and (g) insensitivity and hostility on the part of school personnel (p. 2).

Similarly families, especially from marginalized communities, feel uncertain and unwelcome in their children's schools (Winthrop et al., 2021). Booth and Dunn (2003) conveyed that parents' negative experiences with schools and their negative educational experiences can impede their involvement in their children's education. Hence, if these problems with the lack of ELLs PI continue to exist, it can lead to higher dropout rates in school, poor school attendance, and inferior academic achievement (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

It can also affect students' mental, physical, and social life as well as teachers' activities and the school system. For instance, a few researchers identified the relevance of PI in reducing students' mental health disorder, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, anxiety, and depression (Olvera & Olvera, 2012; Vanderbleek, 2004; Wang et al., 2019; Wang & Sheikh-khalil, 2014). These researchers suggest that schools' personnel, especially school psychologists, should effectively collaborate with diverse parents and families to improve students' mental health. Venderbleek (2004) states that "the research clearly shows family involvement in school-based mental health services is effective in improving student academic performance" (p. 211). Likewise, Vygotsky's theory of "Zone of Proximal Development", ZPD, explained that children can acquire higher mental functions through the support of human social conduct in which parents and their families serve as human social agents. Thus, to achieve these benefits and break the barriers involved in the practice of PI, and to achieve equitable collaboration with

parents depend mostly on the effort of educators. For example, Ishimaru et al. (2016) referred to educators as "cultural brokers" who can play critical roles in bridging the racial, cultural, linguistic, and power divides between schools and nondominant parents and their families (p. 8). It is therefore important to examine how teachers who are cultural brokers are accomplishing their work with families (Ishimaru et al., 2016), i.e., to know their general perceptions and understand the challenges they are experiencing in order to design how they can overcome the challenges.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore: (1) elementary school teachers' perceptions of parental involvement of Spanish-speaking ELLs in a school where Spanish-speaking students are the majority; (2) the challenges teachers were experiencing in the practice of PI of Spanish-speaking ELLs; and (3) the strategies teachers employed to promote parental involvement of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The research will aid in identifying teacher practice of PI relative to the equitable collaboration framework and is aimed to provide ways to overcome the challenges identified to effectively support engagement of parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The study will also identify the strategies that are effective in promoting PI of Spanish-speaking ELLs for educators who work with Spanish-speaking ELLs parents.

Significance of the Study

Many studies have established the general importance of parental involvement on students' education (Flouri & Buchananan, 2004; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Jeynes, 2007; Pomerantz et al., 2007). Researchers have also emphasized that ELLs parents' experiences, expertise, cultural and linguistic knowledge can positively influence children's education when educators view them as resources for students' success (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Good

et al., 2010; Mapp & Bergman, 2021). While the number of ELLs continues to grow in the United States' public schools (NCES, 2023), ELLs parents need to be more involved in their children's education to equitably and effectively collaborate with teachers and administrators for their children' success and growth.

However, the concept of PI is complex, and its complexity has led to the gap between PI literature and its implementation (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018; Wassell et al., 2017). Even the studies that address teachers' perspectives about family involvement for ELLs in an elementary school is limited (Wassell et al., 2017; Winthrop et al., 2021), most specifically research on PI at the elementary school level where ELLs numbers are increasing requires more investigation.

Therefore, this study filled that research gap and added to the body of empirical knowledge about teachers' perspectives on PI of Spanish-speaking ELLs parents in relation to the equity collaboration framework, the challenges teachers are experiencing in the process of PI, and the strategies teachers adopt in dealing with those challenges. This investigation was conducted with teacher participants in an elementary school with highest number of ELLs.

Wassell et al. (2017) stated that teachers' perceptions of PI may possibly serve as institutional structures for PI practice. It is also evident that teachers' perceptions about PI can either promote or inhibit effective practice (Booth & Dunn, 2013; Flynn, 2007; Guo, 2006; Tichenor, 1997; Wassell et al., 2017). Therefore, the following research questions were explored:

RQ1. What are elementary school teachers' perceptions about parental involvement of parents of Spanish-speaking English learners?

RQ2. What are teachers' challenges to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

RQ3. What are teachers' strategies to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

The result of this study will be of interest, reference, and resource to schools and educators who are willing to promote effective ELLs PI. It will also be of benefit to education policy makers in designing policies to promote PI practice. This study will be of benefit to school leaders, principals, in-service and pre-services teachers, other school staff and administrators to effectively promote and implement PI of ELLs. The research findings may also aid in the promotion and development of ELLs parents' programs in school and in the community.

Definition of Terms

English Language Learners (ELLs): This research used the phrase English Language Learners because that is what the research district where this research is conducted used. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) referred to ELLs as students whose home language is a language other than English, comprising both beginners and those who have already developed considerable proficiency. "These students are differing in language, cultural background, and socioeconomic status" (p. 3). Wassell et al. (2017) defined ELLs as "students in U.S. schools who have demonstrated differing levels of English Language proficiency" (p. 1234).

Family engagement: Family engagement is a full, equal, and equitable partnership among families, educators, and community partners to promote children's learning from birth through college and their career (Connecticut State Department of Education, 2018, as cited in Mapp & Bergman, 2021).

Non dominant families: This group is described as a diverse and minority group of families and educationally underserved populations who have been marginalized from the

mainstream settings (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) state that many ELLs parents fit the description of a marginalized group. “Marginalized parents are described as those who are not involved at the same rate as many White, middle-class parents. They often have limited exposure to schools or prior negative experiences with school organizations” (p. 7).

Home-based parental involvement: This type of involvement includes “educational expectations of parents on their children, valuing of education and academic achievement by parents, parents reading with their children, parents taking their children on educational trips e.g., going to the library or museum, parents academic pressure and control, parents engagement of their children in learning at home, parents rendering of assistance to their children in completing homework, parent-to-child discussions about school experiences, parent-to-child discussions about selecting course or programs, parent-to-child discussions about post-high school plans, parents supporting encouragement of their children in learning, and parents setting rules for TV or parents limiting time on TV” (Boonk et al., 2018, p. 9).

School-based parental involvement: This type of involvement includes “parents attending Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, parents volunteering at school, parents visiting the classroom, parents’ attendance at school or class events, parents participating in school functions such as membership in PTA, teacher-to-parent communication about student academic performance, and teacher-parent communication about problems or difficulties at school” (Boonk et al., 2018, p. 9).

Limitations of the Study

In this study I interviewed six English Language Learners (ELLs) teachers in a single elementary school location with the highest percentage of ELLs in the school district to gather

their perceptions, challenges, and strategies of their practice on Spanish-speaking ELLs parents. Therefore, the result of this research may not be generalizable to other schools, teachers, and ELLs parents. However, the findings will be a useful resource to understand teachers' perceptions, challenges, and strategies regarding parental involvement with Spanish-speaking ELLs parents. In the next chapter, Chapter II Literature Review, I provide an overview of the academic literature researched for this study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I present a literature review of different theoretical and empirical research relevant to the purpose and research questions in this study, including several term definitions that aid in understanding the research, and explanations of the theoretical framework of equitable collaborations and six types of parental involvement (PI) model. There are also explanations of teachers' perceptions of PI, and ELLs parents' perceptions of PI. Last, the chapter includes different strategies and suggestions for teachers, schools, education leaders, teacher education programs, and recommendations for policy makers to promote effective PI.

Definition of Parental Involvement

In this study, parental involvement is interchangeably used as parent/family engagement, parent-to-teacher collaborations, and family-school partnership. It means active engagement and investment of parents in their children's education, schooling and other extracurricular activities that is tailored towards enhancing students' academic performances, mental health, and motivation to learn. It involves parenting, school to home effective communication, parents volunteering in school and classroom events, parents supporting their children learning from home, parents being part of decision-making in their children's school, selecting learning goals for their children, and collaborating with their children's schools, teachers and the school community to improve students learning and well-being (Caño et al., 2016; Nye et al., 2006; Winthrop et al., 2021).

Categories of Parental Involvement

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) stated that PI involves many activities which are: "at home and in school" such as "helping with homework", "talking to teachers", "attending school functions", and "taking part in school governance" (p. 12). Similarly, Park et al. (2017) identified two types of PI as (a) homebased parental involvement like parents helping their children with schoolwork and general well-being at home, and (b) school-based parental involvement like parents participating in school sponsored activities like volunteering for the PTA, etc.

Boonk et al. (2018) provided a comprehensive description of the two categories of PI as follows:

> 1. Home-based involvement refers to what parents do at home to promote their children's learning. This type of involvement includes "educational expectations of parents on their children; valuing of education and academic achievement by parents; parents reading with their children; parents taking their children on educational trips e.g., going to the library or museum; parents academic pressure and control; parents engagement of their children in learning at home; parents rendering of assistance to their children in completing homework; parent-to-child discussions about school experiences; parent-to-child discussions about selecting course or programs; parent-to-child discussions about post-high school plans; parents support encouragement of their children in learning; and parents setting rules for TV or parents limiting time on TV" (p. 9).
>
> 2. School-based involvement is basically defined by activities and behaviors parents engage in at school, such as "attending parent-teacher conferences and attending school events. School-based parental involvement includes parents attending Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings; parents volunteering at school; parents visiting the

classroom; parents' attendance at school or class events; parents participating in school functions such as membership in PTA; teacher-to-parent communication about student academic performance; and teacher-parent communication about problems or difficulties at school" (p. 9).

Some researchers are in support of school-based PI to have significant impact on students' learning achievement (Barnard, 2004; Brownlee, 2015; Jimerson et al., 1999; Kimaro & Machumu, 2015**;** Machen et al., 2005; Park et al., 2017). For example, school-based parental PI is said to have improved students' academic progress and built teachers' and parents' effective relationships (Brownlee, 2015). Likewise, the study revealed that parents volunteering for activities in their children's classrooms improved students reading and mathematical skills. It also helped students to develop more confidence and self-efficacy in reading, especially for those students who are achieving below grade level and those who are low-motivated readers (Machen et al., 2005).

However, other researchers argue that home-based PI has more potential benefits related to students' academic achievement (Boonk et al., 2018; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Goodwill & Montgomery, 2014; McWayne et al., 2004). McWayne (2004) reported a positive association with home-based involvement and students' academic achievement mostly in reading and mathematics. Also, Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) identified that at-home PI has more significant effects on younger students' learning achievement than any other form of involvement. Their reasoning is that young pupils acquire necessary skills and psychological qualities of motivation and self-worth from their parents, and the skills learning at home through their parents gradually declines as the children move up to middle and high schools (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandlers, 1997). As a result of this significant link with

home-based PI and student achievement, Goodall and Montgomery (2014) suggested that policy should place more emphasis in promoting home-based parental involvement i.e., parental engagement with children learning that specifically focus on parents and their children learning at home. In fact, PI does not mean parents have to go to school before they can get involved in their children's education, they can promote their children's learning at home, reinforce school learning, get the students to bed on time and ensure they attend schools regularly and timely (Henderson & Berla, 1994).

However, for effective practice of home-based and school-based PI, Ihmeideh et al. (2018) stated that "involvement, whether it be home-based or school-based, could not be possible without establishing a strong and collaborative relationship between these two parties: home and school" (p. 3). This statement explains the power of home and school dual collaborations. Likewise, Flynn (2007), in support of home-based PI, indicated that teachers need to work in collaboration with parents to provide them with the necessary guidance, support, resources, and information needed to effectively support their children at home.

Impact of Parental Involvement on Students

Over the years, studies have demonstrated that PI has significant impact on all students' academic achievement regardless of race and ethnicity (Barnard, 2004; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Fan & Chen, 2001; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002; Lee & Bowen, 2006; McWayne et al., 2004). Lazar and Slostad (1999) stated that "students' achievement is maximized through PI" (p. 206). Hoover-Dempsey and Sandals (2010) also identified some important benefits of PI; it increases students' academic efficacy, increases students' intrinsic motivation to learn, and increases students' self-regulatory skills. According to Hill and Taylor (2004), school involvement promotes achievement through its effects on the

completion and accuracy of homework. Through PI, students exhibit more positive attitudes and behavior (Henderson & Berla, 1994; National PTA, 2000; Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014) and children from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to do better when parents and professionals collaborate to bridge the gap between the culture at home and the learning institution (National PTA, 2000).

Researchers also revealed that parental influence on children's mathematics achievement reduces mathematics anxiety in children (Vukovic et al., 2013). Green et al. (2007) stated that PI "improves students' outcome for all ages, develops students' attributes that support achievement such as self-efficacy for learning, self-regulation skills and knowledge" (p. 532). Similarly, Lazar et al. (1999) stated that "PI improves student grades and long-term academic achievement, increases students' attendance and retention, and enhances motivation and their self-esteem" (p. 1). Hornby and Lafaele (2011) mentioned that "PI improves students' attitudes, behavior, and mental health" (p. 37). Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of Parental Involvement Process (2010) indicated that PI develops students' academic self-efficacy, students' intrinsic motivation to learn, and students' self-regulatory skills. As a result of PI essentialness, federal and state education policy in the United States strongly encourages parents to fully participate in their children's education (Park et al., 2017). The Centre for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2006) conveyed that students' whose parents are involved in their academic endeavors are more likely to earn high grades, enroll in high level programs and achieve success. Such students attend school regularly and punctually, have good behaviors, adapt well in school, and have appropriate social skills.

Impact of Parental Involvement on Parents

Researchers have also highlighted that PI improves parents to teacher relationships and increases parents' confidence in their involvement in their children's education (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). Also, when parents are treated as partners and given relevant information by the teachers, they are more comfortable implementing those strategies they have been hesitant to contribute (The National PTA, 2000). Similarly, teachers' suggestions to parents on how to help their children learn may increase parents' efficacy and parents in turn appreciate teachers' guidance (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002).

Impact of Parental Involvement on Teachers and Schools

Parental involvement can also be of benefit to teachers and schools. For example, schools that work well with families have better teacher morale and attain higher ratings of teachers by parents (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; The National PTA, 2000). Similarly, teachers who promote PI tend to have high levels of teaching efficacy and support from parents. Those teachers are perceived as better teachers by parents (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). Also, school programs that involve parents outperform the same programs without parent and family involvement (The National PTA, 2000). PI improves school climate and students' attendance in school (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Winthrop et al., 2001). Researchers also reported that teachers who promote teacher-parent partnership experience reduced stress levels, prevent confusion by regularly keeping parents informed of the necessary information, and save time for parents' concern (Lazar & Slostad, 1999). Also, teachers who seek information on children's ability and learning needs from parents find it easy to resolve conflicts in the classroom; they examine and implement teaching strategies that are suitable to meet the learning needs of individual students

(Lazar & Slostad, 1999). PI is considered an essential ingredient for the remedy of many problems in education (Fan & Chen, 2001). Akimoff (1996) conveyed that PI is an essential ingredient for a successful school. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of PI Process (2010) specified that PI increases the social dimension of school success. Last, through PI teachers' skills are recognized and better evaluated (Christensen & Cleary, 1990).

Barriers to Parental Involvement

Researchers have reported a number of factors that impede the realization of effective parental involvement, such as factors instigated by teachers and schools, parents, and those initiated by policymakers. This section presents those factors.

Teachers and Schools Factors

1. **Lack of Teacher Training on PI**: Many researchers have recorded that teacher are not formally trained on how to implement PI (Booth & Dunn, 2003; Flanigan, 2007; Flynn, 2007; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Swell, 2019; Winthrop et al., 2021). The lack of teacher training on PI has produced a lack of teachers' understanding of PI benefits (Flynn, 2007), which also produced a failure of teachers to communicate with parents (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). The lack of teachers' training appears to have also produced many other barriers to PI implementation such as neglect of parents' views by the teachers, unwelcome school attitudes, teachers' lack of ability on how to work effectively with parents from different cultural backgrounds, teachers' negative perceptions of PI (Guo, 2006), and teachers' negative beliefs and attitudes towards implementation of PI (Booth & Dunn, 2003).

2. **Teachers' Negative Perceptions of Parents:** Literature has revealed that educators view parents, especially non-dominant parents, as less cooperative, experienced, and educated in

supporting their children's education (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Bermúdez & Márquez, 1996; Winthrop et al., 2021). For example, if a family did not show up for a school's meetings or events, teachers' reactions can often be "that family doesn't care", "they don't know how to help their kids learn", or "they are too busy because they work multiple jobs" (Mapp & Bergman, 2021, p. 9). Mapp and Bergman (2021) said that "busy parents show up if they think educators will listen to them" (p. 9).

3. **A Unidirectional Approach to PI**: Researchers claim that schools mostly operate on a unidirectional approach by focusing on what parents can do to support their children and neglecting what schools can do to support parents and their families to be better involved in their children's education (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). The unidirectional approach was explained as a situation when teachers only teach parents, provide them with resources and information, and educate them without acknowledging or utilizing parents' cultural knowledge and expertise as useful resources (Cho et al., 2019).

4. **Unwelcome School Climate**: It was also documented that families, especially from marginalized communities, feel unheard and uninvited in their children's schools. Families also feel disrespected and unvalued by the school (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Mapp & Bergman, 2021; Winthrop et al., 2021).

5. **Disjuncture Between School Culture and Home Culture**: There was also a lack of connection between school and home cultures that can promote students academically (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

Parental Factors

1. **Language Barriers:** One of the main reasons why ELLs parents may not involve themselves in their children's education is their inability to speak English, which prevents them

from communicating with their children's teachers or other school personnel (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Bermúdez & Márquez,1996; Winthrop et al., 2021).

2. **Parents' Work Interference**: Researchers also reported that parents' multiple work schedules may also prevent them from attending school meetings, events, and creating time to support their children with schoolwork at home, as well as meeting up with their parenting responsibilities (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Bermúdez & Márquez,1996; Winthrop et al., 2021). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) referred to this factor as "Logistical issues" (p. 9), such as the inability of ELLs parents to attend school meetings, conferences, and open house events because of their labor-intensive work schedules. Hill and Taylor (2004) said that some parents are simply hard to reach because of the different circumstances surrounding them.

3. **Multiple Children to Care for by Some Parents**: Another factor that can prevent parents from attending school events and other school activities is the responsibility to take care of other children when called for school meetings or other school events because they will need childcare services (Winthrop et al., 2021).

4. **Parents' Knowledge of Schooling Practices**: Another factor reported to have prevented parents from involving in their children's education is their limited knowledge of schooling; some parents are not educated while others drop out of school. Also, some immigrant parents have no previous exposure and knowledge of the U.S. school system (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Bermúdez & Márquez,1996) and they may not be exposed to strong examples of family engagement in the education of their children (Mapp & Bergman, 2021).

5. **Lack of Confidence:** It was also reported that some parents may not feel confident enough to get involved in their children's education or to contact their children's teachers for any reason (Bermúdez & Márquez,1996).

6. **Parents' Past Negative Experiences with School and Educators:** This factor may prevent parents from getting involved in their children's education if they have once experienced negative interactions with their educators (Booth & Dunn, 2013; Bermúdez & Márquez,1996; Mapp & Bergman, 2021; Winthrop et al., 2021). Booth and Dunn (2013) said that "the negative interactions, which parents are likely to have with the schools, combined with potentially negative recollections of their own educational experiences, can serve as a major barrier to parent involvement in ethnic communities and high-risk inner-city school districts" (p. 11).

7. **Parents' Cultural Beliefs:** Parents' cultural beliefs may also serve as an impeding factor to their involvement. Katz (1996) stated that "some parents may feel hesitant to express their concerns because of cultural beliefs related to the authoritative position of the teacher and their negative school experience with the feeling that their criticism of teachers may put their child at risk" (p. 2).

8. **Parental Values, Perceptions, and Expectations Regarding the Roles of Teachers and Parents:** Some parents believe their role is mainly parenting, where they nurture, care and instill good behavior in children. They believe that the teaching and academic activities of their children should be done by the teachers (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Snell, 2018).

Policymakers, School Leaders, and School Personnel Factors

1. **Inadequate Attention Towards PI in School Planning and Parents' Decision-making:** For instance, a study across 59 countries in April and May 2020 by the Harvard Graduate School of Education surveyed educators and education administration about their school experiences and strategies for re-opening school during COVID-19. Seventy-five percent of the participants reported that the re-opening approaches were designed in collaboration with teachers and 25 percent reported that they collaborated with parents in re-opening of schools

(Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). Similarly, research conducted to examine perceptions of personnel involved in family-school relationships revealed the lowest level of agreement on decision-making as the parents' role (Ihmeideh, 2018). This result implies that most schools exclude parents in school planning and decision-making.

2. **Insufficient Empirical Research and Low Funding Towards Parents' Engagement**: Researchers have reported low empirical research and funding towards the implementation of PI (New Profit, 2019; Reimers & Schleicher, 2020; Winthrop et al., 2021). New Profit (2019) reported that out of billions of dollars allocated for K-12 school education annually, "only 0.3 percent was spent towards parent empowerment" (p. 1). There is a need for schools to provide parents the opportunities to engage as partners. This would fully "unlock the potential for students they serve and exercise their innate power to create and sustain change as well as exercise their power in decision-making for their children, school, and the school system" (New Profit, 2019, pp. 1 & 2).

Theoretical Framework: Equitable Collaborations Framework

The concept of equitable collaboration is rooted in sociological theories (Ishimaru et al., 2016). It emerged from different literature such as "community collaborations" (Ishimaru, 2014), "families in the driver's seat" (Ishimaru et al., 2019), and "liberatory approach to family engagement" (Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Ishimaru et al. (2019) explained that "equitable collaboration aimed at systemic change goals focused on relationship and capacity-building strategies that attend to the broader sociopolitical contexts of systemic change efforts where families play more transformative roles" (p. 3). This framework emphasizes the need to treat parents as experts, decision makers, and as educational leaders (Ishimaru, 2014; Ishimaru et al., 2016; Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Mapp and Bergman (2021) stated that "in the practice of

equitable collaborations, families should have access to needed information to support their children's learning and be able to act as an effective advocate for change" (p. 3). In equitable collaboration practice, family engagement must be seen as a core element of effective practice where parents are engaged as co-creators, where family fun of knowledge is honored, and a welcoming culture is created (Ishimaru et al., 2019; Mapp & Bergman, 2021).

Equitable collaboration is described as a dual partnership between home and school (Ishimaru et al., 2016; Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Dual partnership implies "a two-way exchange" (Ishimaru et al., 2016), bidirectional and reciprocity (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Cho & Votava, 2021) where school and home provide support in reciprocal. Ishimaru et al. (2019) also referred to dual partnership as one that "builds authentic relationships, reciprocity, and accountability to one another" (p. 12). The equitable form of interactions reflect when the expertise of families, their strengths, differences in language, cultural practices and their experiences in and out of the school are realized and tapped into as resources by educators. It is also when educators connect parents to the institutional resources, training and workshop, and knowledge needed, and when teachers encourage parents to advocate for their children and changes to the institution as well as encourage parents' leadership participation and decision making (Ishimaru et al., 2016; Ishimaru et al., 2019).

Research conducted by Cho and Votava (2021) on family engagement of Nepali parents of dual language learners suggested to schools to provide language support for parents who speak English as an additional language such as interpreter, written materials, parent workshop about advocacy and leadership. Cho and Votava (2021) stated that "such accommodations and equitable collaborations can help parents be more engaged in decision making about educational programs for dual language learners" (p. 15).

The equitable collaborations framework emphasized capacity building where parents work productively for systemic and community improvement (Ishimaru et al., 2016). Equitable collaborations are built on systemic change that encourage parents to take up leadership roles, seek equality between educators and families, encourage strategies that emphasize relationships and capacity building (Ishimaru et al., 2016). The equity collaboration should be built on mutual trust and respect and be fair and just, it should enable parents to have access to power and act as co-designer with the educators in planning, defining their shared challenges to improve the educational experience for their children (Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Mapp and Bergman (2021) stated that when families are empowered as true partners in their children's education, students "thrive, schools are stronger and the whole community benefits" (p. 3). Likewise, "building collective capacity and power can impact schools at various levels" (Ishimaru et al., 2019, p. 2). Lastly, equitable form of interactions of PI encourages "division of labor" that balances parents and educators' roles such as decision in school instruction, management, parent education and participation that are jointly made by both parties (Ishimaru et al., 2019, p. 8). Therefore, this study explores how teacher participants have been practicing "equitable collaborations" relating to their perceptions, challenges, and strategies in practice of PI with Spanish-speaking ELLs parents.

The Six Types of Parental Involvement Model

The concept of equitable collaborations framework is aligned with the Six Types of Parental Involvement (PI) Model developed by Epstein (Epstein et al., 2009). This model is widely accepted by researchers (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Caño et al., 2016). For instance, Bower and Griffin (2011) stated that "Epstein Model continues to be one of the most widely referenced frameworks for PI" (p. 78). The Epstein model explained six ways parents can get involved in

their children's education. The Epstein model acknowledged bidirectional communication and encouraged schools to develop avenue for parents' ownership within the school through shared decision-making; the model also works towards empowering parents to have voice within the school and recognizes the work of the parents in the homes, schools and in the communities (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Wilder (2014) made it clear that these types of PI have different effects on students' learning depending on children's age and other characteristics.

The model highlighted six types of PI models: "parenting" "communicating" "volunteering' "learning at home" "decision making" and "collaborating with the community" (Epstein et al., 2009). Reseachers explained Epstein's six expanded ideas on PI types as:

1. Parenting. "helping where parents and extended family members are aware and conversant about child maturity and offering possessions that permit them to ascertain home environments that can enhance learning" (Caño et al., 2016, p. 144). In other words, it is how parents nurture and learn about their children's growth as well as how they create a conducive environment at home that will enhance children's learning (Flynn, 2007). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) described parenting as informal activities where parents "contributing to school success in terms of informal activities such as nurturing, instilling cultural values, talking with their children, and sending them to school clean and rested" (p. 8).

2. Communicating. "Communicating-effective, suitable two-way contact about school events and student academic or personal development and progress, and/or insight within the home environment" (p. 144). School-to-home effective communication is about school activities, students learning, personal development, students' learning styles and progress (Flynn, 2007). "It involves communicating with families about school programs and student progress with two-way communications" (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008, p. 11).

3. Volunteering. “Volunteering-organizing and participating in activities initiated by school personnel like parent-teacher and community association or generated by community members aimed at supporting students and school programs, such as service-learning projects, violence reduction assemblies” (Caño et al., 2016, p. 144). Volunteering is when parents participate in various school events and classroom activities in an effort towards supporting students’ success (Flynn, 2007). It involves recruiting efforts to involve families as volunteers and audiences (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

4. Learning at home. “Learning at home wherein it is providing information to parents and families about school procedures like homework opportunities, grading rubrics in order to help them supplement their children's academic activities” (Caño et al., 2016, p. 144). Learning at home is when parents support their children to learn at home by helping them complete the school assignments and when schools/teachers provide information and resources to parents on how to help their children (Flynn, 2007). “It involves families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curricular-linked activities” (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008, p. 11).

5. Decision-making. “Decision-making in which this includes the parents and family members from all backgrounds as representatives and leaders on school committees agreed upon the educational events” (Caño et al., 2016, p. 144). This aspect of PI is when parents act as a key contributor in making decisions on their children’s learning and other educational events (Flynn, 2007). **“**It involves including families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through councils and organizations” (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008, p. 11).

6. Collaborating**.** “Collaborating with the community-identifying and integrating funds, services, and other assets from the community to lend a hand and meet the needs of school

personnel, students, and their families (Caño et al., 2016, p. 144). This is when parents' partner in using funds and rendering community services to meet the needs of school, school staff, students, and their families, as well as "collaborating and coordinating with the work and resources of community-based agencies, colleges, and other groups to strengthen school programs" (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008, p. 11).

The Epstein Model has many valuable factors that reflect equitable collaboration features, however the Model "may not fully capture how parents are or want to be involved in their children's education" (Bower & Griffin, 2011, p. 78). Bower and Griffin (2011) suggested that "new ways of working with parents in high-minority, high-poverty schools are warranted" (p. 78). In my research I assumed that the new way of working with diverse families is the framework of equitable collaboration, which operates on just and fair practice. Arias and Morillo-Campbell, (2008) referred to the Epstein Model as the "Traditional Model of ELLs PI". They then suggested that programs looking to effectively accommodate ELLs parents should include a cultural knowledge framework of non-traditional models of PI (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008, p. 11). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) described "Non-Traditional Models of ELLs PI to include all the features of equitable collaborations framework that involve "developing a reciprocal understanding of schools and families that situate in cultural strengths of family and community within the school curriculum, parental education, parent advocacy, parental empowerment, and validating the cultural capital and "funds of knowledge" those parents possess (p. 11). The non-traditional model of ELLs PI initiated a family literacy program to teach ELLs parents how to read and write and other literacy skills that they can use in supporting their children (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

Teachers' Perspectives of Parental Involvement

Some teachers believe in the involvement of parents to be active in their children's education while some teachers believe that all teaching of academic skills should be taught by the teacher in the classroom; they believe that parents do not have the necessary skills required to teach (Becker & Epstein, 1982). Becker and Epstein statement is reflected in research on teachers' perceptions of parents' engagement which affirmed teachers' perceptions of parents' engagement in their children's education as an obstacle to their children's learning because of their inexperience on how to balance their engagement in all activities (Borup, 2016). Similarly, the result of a research on pre-service teachers' perceptions on PI indicated parents' interest in their children's educational success but they are not always sure of how to support them (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). Some teachers have also held the perception that parents have negative reactions and feelings about teachers as teachers also have about them (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002).

Some teachers use different strategies that promote PI (Tichenor, 1997), while many teachers perceived that contacting parents and involving them in their children's education are not their responsibilities (Schweiker-Mara, 2000). This is because teachers have developed "fears and apprehensions about PI which stem from a fundamental flaw in teacher education preparation" (Lazar & Slotstad, 1999, p. 207). Booth and Dunn (2013) highlighted that school personnel might either facilitate or inhibit PI by their own beliefs and attitudes about PI. Similarly, Guo (2006) mentioned that teacher attitudes, institutional racism, and teachers' negative perceptions can hinder PI practice. In addition, Flynn (2007) stated that teachers often see parents as being suspicious and hostile while some teachers are misguided in their belief that

if they avoid contacting the parents, they will reduce parents' confrontations. With this negative belief and misinformation teachers are reluctant to partner with parents.

Teachers' perceptions of PI may be affected by their lack of confidence. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2002) stated that "personal sense of teaching efficacy has been related to stronger confidence in one's efforts, greater goal-related behavior, and greater persistence in overcoming obstacles" (p. 845). Likewise, teachers with necessary skills and strategies on PI tend to have positive belief and confidence implementing PI. Also, teachers who hold a positive belief that parents can contribute meaningfully to the academic achievement of students are more likely to promote PI than those with negative views and a teacher with robust teaching efficacy has a tendency of promoting PI. However, these well-equipped teachers may feel hesitant to collaborate with parents if they have come across "negative encounters" in their attempt involving parents in their children's education (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002, p. 844). Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2002), then described what they referred to as "negative encounter" as "dissatisfaction, frustration, mistrust, or anger" (p. 844) that may prevent teachers to parents' collaborations (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). Young et al. (2013) mentioned that miscommunication between parents and teachers occurs because of how parental is conceptualized. In summary, if teachers are well prepared to practice effective PI and they are confident in their ability to do so, they should be able to handle any negative incident with the parents and they should be able to control their emotions so as not to cause misunderstanding between them and parents. Winthrop et al. (2021) advised that teachers and school leaders are not to be blamed for these negative attitudes and perceptions, and that they should instead be trained to effectively collaborate and engage parents of their students.

ELLs Parents' Perspectives of their Involvement

Although, ELLs parents have deep concern about their children's education, they frequently view their role in their children's schooling very differently from the way that mainstream English speaking communities view their relationship with schools (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) stated that "many ELLs parents perceive their role as providing nurturing, teaching values, and instilling good behaviors in their children and often feel reluctant to take up responsibilities they perceive to be for teachers and schools" (p. 10). Some parents also see teachers in a position of authority, and they are scared to communicate or present their concerns with them (Katz, 1996). Moreover, some parents have the mindset that their children are to be cared for during the period of school and any concern with their children during that period should be dealt with by the teachers (Flynn, 2007).

Why Parents Are Not Involved and How to Get Them Involved

Flynn (2007) identified why parents are not involved in their children education and also identified ways to make them get involved. First, Flynn explained that parents are hesitant to get involved in their children's education because most teachers only communicate students' problem behavior to the parents and parents are not always ready to receive such reports. Flynn suggested that before any report of problem behavior, teachers should have severally communicated students' good behavior and teachers should ensure to provide "simple strategies that parents can implement with teacher guidance" (p. 24), to correct the situation when it is necessary to communicate bad behavior. Another reason why parents are not involved is because they are intimidated by school and the use of educational jargon by the teachers. Flynn suggested that teachers should communicate at the level that the parents understand and feel comfortable with. Flynn also explained that some parents sometimes run away from their responsibilities

saying, “he is your problem from 9 to 3”; “she is fourteen and old enough to take responsibility for her own actions”; “don’t call me”. Flynn suggested that teachers should not give up on this type of home, and teachers should find positive ways to communicate with such parents. Teachers should be persistent in contacting and sharing positive information and teachers should use a team approach when such parents refuse to be contacted. Lastly, parents hesitate to get involved due to the language barrier for parents who do not speak English. Flynn suggested that the notice to home should be written in family home language and arrange for interpreters during parents’ conferences or use the parents’ extended families to assist in home-to-school communication. Flynn’s idea is like that of Arias and Morillo-Campbell, 2008 explained earlier in this review.

Strategies to Increase ELLs Parental Involvement

The following list reflects the different strategies researchers have suggested promoting parental involvement practice, especially for the ELL population.

1. **Promote Effective Communication.** Provide a home-school coordinator or liaison, initiate home visits by teachers, send out bilingual newsletters, provide a multilingual telephone homework line, and schedule monthly meetings at a local community center (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) suggested that any information sent to home should be in both the Native and English language. In addition, bilingual staff should be available to communicate with parents when they come to school and interpreters provided during school meetings and other events.
2. **Acknowledge Parents’ Cultural Capital.** Schools should acknowledge and honor parents’ cultural values, their funds of knowledge, view them as strengths, and

incorporate them into the school curriculum (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Ishimaru, 2014; Mapp & Bergman, 2011).

3. **Create a Welcoming School Environment.** Create a welcoming school environment that promotes positive attitudes among the school staff (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

4. **Provide Teachers and Parents Training.** Researchers suggested that training should be available for teachers to help them develop and practice cultural and responsive collaborations, and to parents to help them understand how they need to be involved (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

5. **Build Parents Capacity**. Building capacity of parents should focus on empowering them to connect family engagement to learning and development (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Mapp & Bergman, 2011).

6. **Reject Deficit Views.** Schools should reject deficit-based views of families, develop a co-design model of engagement that allows educators and families to work together, define their challenges as one team to improve students' educational experiences, and see family engagement as a core element of effective and equitable educational practices (Mapp & Bergman, 2011).

7. **Modify School Meetings and Provide Childcare Services**. Schools should modify meetings to accommodate parents' work schedules and provide childcare services to facilitate parental attendance at school functions (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

8. **Provide Specific Invitations to Parents.** Schools should invite extended family to school activities (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2010).

9. **Provide Home Visits to Families.** Teacher should provide home visits to families (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

10. **Promote Mutual Trust and Respect**. Schools should create and promote a home-to-school partnership that is built on mutual trust and respect (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Jeynes, 2010).

11. **Promote Family Engagement.** Engage families as co-creators, decision-makers, and advocates for children's education (Mapp & Bergman, 2011).

12. **Promote Welcoming School Culture**: Create a welcoming school culture that attracts parents' attention (Mapp & Bergman, 2011).

In addition to the above strategies, Winthrop (2022) summarized five key insights from a playbook for family-school engagement, which was designed to help education leaders and families effectively collaborate. The key insights are: (a) Teachers learn various kinds of ways to engage and listen to a wider diversity of families; (b) Teachers and school leaders required to be trained; (c) Educators bring school to families, not just families to school; this arrangement will benefit parents/caregivers who may find it difficult to visit their children's schools; (d) Educators build trust by engaging parents not just involving them; and (e) Educators make time to have an intentional conversation about what makes for a good education in partnership with parents and families.

Winthrop et al. (2021) stated that "without the training and skills to effectively build trusting relationships with family's miscommunication and misunderstanding can abound" (p. 25). Other researchers have also suggested that teacher education programs need to improve preservice teacher training on PI (Flanigan, 2007; Flynn, 2007). Likewise, Lazar et al. (1999) also proposed that PI should be included as a core component course in preservice teacher

education and professional development. Also, Flynn (2007) highlighted the need for teacher training to help teachers "reflect upon their own concerns and assumptions about PI, the need to include in-depth study of the issues surrounding parent-home alliances and provide teachers candidates with the opportunities to develop a variety of skills and strategies essential for success" (p. 27).

The responses of some faculty members in Flanigan's (2007) research are that the teacher education programs need to do a great deal of more work of helping prospective teachers find ways of encouraging and inviting parents without blaming those students whose parents are not involved. Another faculty member mentioned that teacher educators need to develop some communication skills to use in conversing with parents. One other faculty member stated that "we do not have a special course that specifically deals with teachers and families ... college students do encounter problems in students teaching when they have to contact parents" (p. 97). Flanigan (2007) stated that the topic of schools partnering with parents and communities must be incorporated into the required curriculum of teacher education programs. Epstein (2001) alluded that it is an essential ingredient to provide teachers with the skills to work effectively with parents. Booth and Dunn (2013) suggested that teachers need knowledge of specific Strategies for getting parents more involved; they need to plan for implementing these strategies and give support for implementing specific plans. Likewise, policy and program goals should be to build and enhance teachers' capacities in skills and knowledge of PI, build their connection and networking with parents (Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Hill and Taylor then suggested that "linking research on PI to teacher training programs may go far to support family-school collaborations" (p. 163). One of the ways to improve PI training in teacher education preparation programs is to

implement role-playing techniques in the college classroom to teach PI strategies and skills to the teachers in training.

Role-playing strategy is a comprehensive method of creative teaching and solid learning; it is also useful for acquisition of information and integration of knowledge (Swell, 2019). Jarvis et al. (2002) also explained that role-playing "emphasizes the social nature of learning and sees cooperative behavior as stimulating students both socially and intellectually" (p. 2). This strategy is perceived as an example of technique that can promote real learning experiences to attain PI knowledge for the teachers in training. Jarvis et al. (2002) stated that "a typical role-playing activity would have students taking on a role of a character, learning and acting as that individual would do in a real setting" (p. 2). Swell (2019) explained that the process of role-playing in learning is more creative, whereby the teachers reflect on the learning objectives and plan series of events that may likely occur relating to those objectives and the possibilities of things that might be done, activities that might be carried out and the materials that might be used. Then, dramatize the specific event as if in a real-life situation. Role playing can be most effective when it arises spontaneously out of class discussions (Swell, 2019). Swell (2019) stated further that the use of a student's own material brings a freshness and live quality, and also has great value as a method of rehearsing for the reality of practice. Jarvis et al. (2002) also highlighted some other advantages of role-playing that it increases students' interest in the subject matter and understanding of the course contents, increases students' involvement and active participation. Hence, using this method of teaching and learning PI strategies will have a significant impact on pre-service learning experiences on PI.

Flynn (2007) suggested that teacher education programs should integrate training on PI during classroom seminars and on the field placement. Flynn listed those activities to be covered

during seminar and those to be covered during field experience. The activities to be covered during a pre-service teacher seminar are (a) Respond to a survey measuring their own beliefs and concerns regarding parental involvement, as well as their perceived skills to involve parents; (b) Explain the importance of the parents' role in their children's education and the resulting benefits; (c) Describe the importance of the teacher's role in involving parents and the resulting benefits; (d) Describe the parental behaviors most critical to academic success; (e) Cite the obstacles that both parents and teachers must overcome in fostering alliances; (f) Develop samples of written communication to the home such as welcoming letters, progress reports, and certificates of achievement; (g) Role-play effective conferencing skills such as active listening, open ended questions, and empathic responding; (h) Invite parents to the seminar or interview parents for the purpose of understanding parents' perspectives; and (i) Complete an exit survey to measure any changes in preservice teachers' beliefs and concerns.

Flynn (2007) suggested some activities teachers education programs need to promote during pre-services field experiences are that teachers' educators should continue developing communication skills through: (a) writing welcoming letters to all parents informing them that they will be working with their child for a specified period; (b) sitting in on parent-teacher conferences; (c) calling parents to notify them of student progress; and (d) participating in Back-to-School events, PTA meetings, and other parent-related activities. Flynn concluded that "classroom teachers are the key to changing the level of parental participation. But this will only occur when our teacher education programs start to implement the recommendations found in the literature and finally provide preservice teachers with the skills and strategies necessary for fostering alliances with those who are so critical to a child's success in school, the parents" (p. 27).

A book titled “Collaborating to Transform and Improve Education System: A Playbook for Family-Schools” published in collaboration with Centre for Universal Education (CUE), presented some effective and useful approaches for school to partner with parents. The authors of the book analyzed 534 strategies across 64 countries and selected 62 of these strategies as useful strategies for schools to connect with families at home. The overall goal of the strategies is to improve students’ attendance and school completion, improve students’ learning and development, redefine purpose of education for students and society, providing useful information to parents and caregivers, building relationships, shifting mindsets, building skills and provide resources to parents (Winthrop et al., 2021). These strategies are spearheaded by different bodies such as schools’ union, ministry of education, teachers, world vision, and other NGOs.

In summary, one could deduce that effective PI is beyond parents visit to the school or parent supporting their children at home and that it also involved parents having the understanding of school logistics, parents are provided with needed resources and training on how to support their children, parents act as advocate for educational concerns, school account are transparent to parents, parents are empowered, parents have voice in changing policy, teachers have opportunities to learn various students festivals and culture that will help them design appropriate and relevant learning opportunities to meet their students learning needs, and parents participate in district education planning and designs among others (Winthrop, 2022). New Profit detailed that the parent support field has remained significantly underfunded (New Profit, 2019), which has led to many parents suffering in maintaining their children’s learning due to lack of support and guidance from schools ((Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). Hereafter, parents need to be involved in school planning and decision making and they need to be

supported by providing needed resources and training to best support their children at home (Winthrop et al., 2021; Flynn, 2007).

Policy Makers and Educational Programs to Promote ELLs PI

Although, educational policy required all teacher education programs to include PI training in their programs but that was only in paper; only very few teachers' education program include the PI training for pre-service teachers; and the professional development for in-service teachers is not adequate (Flanigan, 2007). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) recommended that policy makers should support the professional preparation of teachers who can identify community funds of knowledge for curricular development and school outreach. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) also suggested that policy makers to "support the implementation of traditional PI programs that are culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate; fund the implementation of non-traditional PI programs that reflect a reciprocal involvement in the school/parent community; and support community-based education programs that inform parents about school values and expectations and work with parents to help them become advocates for their children" (p. 16). Likewise, Vukovic et al. (2013) also suggested that **p**olicy makers and programs provide training, resources, and support for parents in culturally appropriate ways to create home learning environments that foster high expectations for children's success.

Mapp and Bergman (2021) mentioned that "professional learning time is a valuable resource for ongoing learning about how to engage parents and families" (p. 19). They further recommended that teachers need to be empowered by developing their cognition in shifting their negative beliefs, creating welcoming culture, building mutual respect and trust, and culturally responsive skills. They suggested that policy and programs should work on goals that build and enhance the capacity of educators' and families' "4 C" areas: (a) "Capabilities—developing

educators' skills and knowledge on PI; (b) Connections—enhancing networks between educators and families; (c) Cognition—Shifts in beliefs and values of educators towards parents and their families; and (d) Confidence—enhancing educators' self-efficacy" (p. 11).

Parental involvement has been said to improve students in many areas of life (Barnard, 2004; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Fan & Chen, 2001; Hoover-et al., 2010; Lee and Bowen, 2006; McWayne et al., 2004) and researchers recommended using equitable collaboration perspectives in its implementation (Ishimaru et al., 2019; Mapp & Bergman, 2021). However, some researchers indicated that the practice of PI that reflected equitable collaboration has not been realized (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Flynn, 2007; Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2010) suggested that teachers need to understand the contexts and processes of family-school relationships that are established on mutual respect, communication, and trust for effective partnership. Furthermore, researchers also explained that teachers' perceptions can promote or inhibit the effective practice of PI (Booth & Dunn, 2013; Flynn, 2007; Guo, 2006; Tichenor, 1997; Wassell et al., 2017) with the intention that teachers are the key agents in the practice of PI (Flynn, 2007; Ishimaru et al., 2016). Through the literature review, this researcher explored teachers' perceptions, practices, and experiences of PI for Spanish-speaking parents of ELLs relevant to equitable collaboration perspectives. The next chapter, Chapter III Methodology, presents the research design used for this study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the research design, which includes information on participant samples, data collection procedures, interview instruments, and ethical considerations in qualitative research. The chapter also includes data analysis procedures and the research validity method.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore (1) Elementary school teachers' perceptions of parental involvement (PI) of Spanish-speaking ELLs; (2) Challenges teachers experience in the practice of PI with Spanish-speaking ELLs; and (3) Strategies to promote PI of Spanish-speaking ELLs.

First, the study identified teachers' perceptions related to equitable collaboration and the types of PI models. Second, the study identified challenges teachers experience in their collaborations with Spanish-speaking parents and provided ways to overcome those challenges to effectively support the engagement of parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs. Third, the study identified strategies that are effective in promoting PI of Spanish-speaking ELLs for educators who work with Spanish-speaking ELLs parents.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are elementary school teachers' perceptions about parental involvement of parents of Spanish-speaking English learners?

RQ2. What are teachers' challenges to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

RQ3. What are teachers' strategies to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

Qualitative Research Design

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described qualitative research as a "naturalistic inquiry" (p. 106) that attempts to understand and make sense of phenomena from the perspectives of the participants (Merriam, 2002). Qualitative research design is intended to understand participants' perspectives rather than the prediction of an event (Marshall, 1997). In qualitative research, "the meaning of words is socially constructed by individuals through their interactions with their world" (Merriam, 2002, p. 3). Merriam (2002) explains further that "qualitative research is an interpretative approach to people's experiences and the meaning it has for them" (p. 4). The sample participants in qualitative research are relatively small, which makes the research findings difficult to generalize (Cochran, 2002; Merriam, 2002).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified four paradigms in informing and guiding inquiry, especially in social research, as positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and related ideology/positions, and constructivism. They explained that "constructivism and critical theory are associated with qualitative research, while positivism and post-positivism are associated with quantitative research" (p. 106). This study adopts the "constructivism model" because the aim of the study is to create knowledge through interactions of the researcher with the teacher participants on the phenomenon understudied i.e., the concept of parental involvement. The aim of inquiry in constructivism is to understand and reconstruct pre-existing perceptions that participants and investigators held and are still open to new interpretations of information

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher of this study aimed to gather participants' responses on the phenomenon understudied and relate the responses to the pre-existing knowledge in the relevant literature to construct new knowledge that will be useful in promoting PI practice of ELLs parents.

I adopted a qualitative research method with a basic interpretive design approach as the most appropriate for the purpose of this study. An elementary school with a higher percentage of Spanish-speaking ELLs in a particular school district of Texas in the United States was purposely selected with sample criterion. The study adopted semi-standardized open-ended interviews to collect participants' responses on the phenomenon under study, and the responses were analyzed with a basic interpretive approach guided by an inductive analysis method.

Basic Interpretive Qualitative Approach

The basic interpretive qualitative approach is one type of qualitative methodology that is designed to understand the meaning that participants hold regarding a phenomenon whereby the researcher acts as an instrument in data collection and analysis. It is an inductive strategy, and its research outcome is descriptive in nature (Merriam, 2002). Merriam (2002) stated that "basic interpretive qualitative study seeks to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives, and worldviews of the respondents" (Merriam, 2002, p. 7). Therefore, this qualitative approach is appropriate for this study as this investigation is mainly to understand the perspectives of teacher participants on the concept of ELLs PI.

Rationale for Choosing Qualitative Research

Merriam (2002) stated that "if your primary intention is to understand a phenomenon, a qualitative approach is appropriate" (p. 4). The aim of this study is not to predict, generalize, or replicate the study results, nor reject or accept research hypotheses, but to have an in-depth

understanding of the participants' perceptions and their practice of PI with Spanish-speaking parents. I was interested in the real experiences of the participants, and their realistic descriptions of their perceptions and experiences of the phenomenon. My interactions with the participants gave me the opportunity to not only probe the participants' responses and observe their physical reactions to the questions asked, but also to modify the interview questions based on the flow of the interview for a better understanding and interpretation of the participants' responses. Also, this qualitative research approach enabled me to cover an extensive range of phenomena and enabled the research participants to be part of solving problems by contributing their experiences to the development of effective strategies in the implementation of PI.

Sample Participants

Merriam (2002) suggested the use of "purposive sampling" for qualitative research since it seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon from the perspective of the participants. Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling that is not representative of a population and its research findings cannot be generalized (Etikan et al., 2016). It is a process of selecting participants who are suitable for the study. Etikan et al. (2016) stated that "researchers decide on what needs to be known and set out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience" (p. 2). In addition, Etikan et al. (2016) provided guidelines for researchers who need to determine what criteria are essential in selecting research participants:

1. Identify and select individuals or groups of individuals that are proficient and well-informed about the phenomenon of interest.

2. Consider their availability and willingness to participate and their ability to communicate their experiences and opinions in an articulative, expressive, and reflective manner.

Therefore, this researcher identified the following criteria to use for the selection of participants in this study:

1. The research site was purposefully selected because it had a high percentage of 47% for ELLs.

2. Six teachers were purposefully selected in a single elementary school setting who have been working with ELLs and their parents for at least 3 years. The year of teaching experience was identified after the review of teachers' profiles on the teacher page and on the demographic questionnaire that participants completed before the interview was conducted. I assumed that teacher participants with at least three years of experience working with ELLs and their parents would have adequate knowledge of the interview questions.

3. Participants had comprehensive knowledge of the school culture and practice regarding PI of ELLs. I identified teacher participants who had adequate knowledge regarding the participants' responses to the related question under the demographic questionnaire and their profiles located on the school website.

4. The selected participants were willing and available to participate in the study.

5. Participants were willing to share their experiences and perceptions on the research phenomena. The willingness of the teacher participants to share their experiences of the phenomena was identified when they provided their consent to participate in the research and signed the informed consent form.

6. Participants from different ethnic groups were selected.

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

The demographic questionnaires were completed by the participants before the interviews were conducted. The selected participants represented diverse race, ethnicity and elementary grade levels. There were five females and one male participants. Four of the six participants spoke languages other than the English language and the two white participants spoke only English.

All of the participants had master's degrees in education and teaching endorsement certifications to teach students who learn English as a second language (ESL). None of the participants had formal educational training on parental involvement (PI), even though they all had more than three years of teaching experience working with ELLs and their families. The lowest number of teaching experience was 4 years, and the highest number was 17 years. Each of the teacher participants had more than 6 ELLs; the number of ELLs they taught ranged from 7 to 30 students.

Research Site

The participants were selected from a K-5 elementary school located at a particular Independent School District (ISD) in North Texas. The school is a Title 1 school, which means it is a school consisting of a minimum of 40% of students from low-income families; the students are considered at risk for school achievement; and they are qualified for free or reduced lunch. This school population has 53% Hispanic students, 31% White, 10% Black, 4% two or more races, 1% Asian or Pacific Islander, 1% Native American, and 1% Native Hawaiian or another Pacific Island. Also, 47% of the student population are English Language learners (ELLs) and 53% of the students are from low-income families (Great School.org, 2022).

The school had 68 teachers including English language teachers, Dual Language teachers, Regular classroom teachers, and Special Education teachers. Each grade had at least three English Language teachers/dual language teachers. The school report stated that 92% of the teachers in this school had more than three years of teaching experience and the majority of teachers spoke languages other than English Languages (Great School.org, 2022). The school demographic report revealed that the selected school had more than one-half of students' population learning English as a second language with Hispanic students being the majority. Therefore, this research sought to explore how Hispanic parents have been involved in their children's education through teachers' perceptions, experiences, and practices.

Data Collection

Data in basic interpretive qualitative methodology can be collected through interviews, observation, or document analysis (Merriam, 2002). I adopted the use of interviews as a means of data collection because it is an appropriate method for answering the research questions in this study. Maxwell (2012) explained that interviews are an efficient, valid, and useful way of obtaining participants' perspectives on the topic of research. An interview is the only way to explore past events and other events that you cannot understand by observation methods. There are three types of interview methods: 1) Highly Structured Interview: is a type of interview initially determined by specific interview questions and the order to be asked; 2) Unstructured Interview: The researcher has topic areas to explore but the interview questions are not predetermined nor the order in which they will be asked; and 3) Semi-structured Interview: This interview method is a combination of the little of both structured and unstructured interviews. Semi-Structured has some specific interview questions predetermined and those questions will be a guide for the interview without following the exact wordings or how they are listed. The

researcher can modify the questions based on the flow of the interview and the opportunity to ask additional questions for clarification (Merriam, 2002).

Therefore, this study adopted the use of semi-structured interviews to explore detailed information on the research topic. I met with the participants one-on-one to explore their perceptions of the phenomenon and then transcribed each participant's responses immediately after the interview.

I employed the following steps to collect data from the participants:

1. Had interview guide, notebook and pen, and audio recording device to record the interviews conversations.
2. Met the participants one-on-one through zooming as requested. The researcher was in a secure location (the researcher's home office). Five of the participants were interviewed on Zoom connecting from their houses, and the last participant after school dismissal on Friday in her classroom also connected by Zoom.
3. Explained the process to the participants that the audio recording would be used to record their responses so that the researcher could listen to them again to cross-check what was written down and ask the participants if they would like their voice recorded. Also, I informed the participants that we would go through several questions and that they were free to ask for clarification if the question was not clear or understood, and they could skip the question if they did not have an answer and that I could also ask questions for clarification of information.
4. Had specific interview questions predetermined and those questions acted as a guide for the interview without following the exact wordings or how they were listed. I had the

opportunity to modify the questions based on the flow of the interview and the opportunity to ask additional questions for clarification.

5. After receiving permission from the participants to have their voices recorded, I turned on the audio recording, asked questions, listened to the participants, and at the same time, wrote the participants' responses as much as possible. I asked for clarification of responses, asked additional questions, and/or followed up with questions to gain more detailed responses.
6. Followed the interview guide and ensured to address all the questions in the guide.
7. Thanked participants for their participation in the research and let them know that I might contact them for further clarification and review of their responses after transcription was completed.
8. The interview duration times were 45 minutes, 51 minutes and 10 seconds, 54 minutes and 40 seconds, 57 minutes, 58 minutes, 1 hour and 5 minutes, for an average of 55 minutes.

Ethical Considerations

Eyisi (2016) described ethics as "professional regulations and codes of conduct that guide the researcher in his dealings with participants. It is critical to the success or failure of educational research" (p. 98). The following sections explain how I obtained permission to the research field and protected the research site and the participants.

Permissions

The researcher sought the permission of the school principal to the research field and then to the participants. I contacted the school principal where the research was conducted through email. The principal approval response is included in Appendix C.

After the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application protocol was approved, I located potential teachers' emails on the school website and sent them an invitation letter requesting their interest to participate in the research. A copy of the invitation letter to the participants is included in Appendix D.

After the participants agreed to participate in the research, participants and I agreed on a time to meet to go through the voluntary informed consent. The informed consent form is in Appendix E. Then, selected participants and I agreed on a date to meet for the interview for each participant. I allowed participants to suggest a private location where they wanted the interview to be held.

Homan (2001) stated that "the voluntary informed consent of the human subject is essential" (p. 330). He explained that informed consent is to inform participants of the nature, purpose, and implications of the research, and that participation should be voluntary (p. 330). I did not force, disguise, or deceive the participants to participate in the study. The following exemplifies information included in the "Voluntary Informed Consent" form:

1. Explain the nature and the purpose of the study to the participants.

2. Let them know that taking part in the study is voluntary, that they can decide to take part and not to take part, and they can opt-out at any time.

3. Let them know that their decision not to take part in the research or opt-out will not be held against them.

4. Let them know that they are free to ask questions whenever they need to do so.

5. Let them know that they are free to skip any question if they do not feel like responding to it.

6. Let them know the duration of the interview.

7. Let them know the process to follow if they agree to take part in the study.

8. Let them know who has access to the information they provided.

9. Let them know that the study results can be published.

Obtaining Informed Consent and Demographic Information

To obtain the informed consent, I met with the potential participants in the school one-on-one, gave them a copy of the informed consent form, and reviewed the consent form with them. I ensured that participants understood what was reviewed and allowed them time to look over the documents and ask questions. After all the participants' questions and concerns were addressed by the researcher, I requested the participants to provide their signatures on the consent forms. Two copies of the consent form were signed by each participant; I kept a signed copy in a file and the participants kept the other signed copies. On that day, I requested the participants to complete a short demographic questionnaire to understand their suitability for the research. Finally, I arranged a convenient day that the participants could meet for the interview. On that day, all the participants requested that the interview be conducted through Zoom.

Privacy and Confidentiality

To protect the privacy and confidentiality of the teacher participants, the selected school for this research is not identified by name and likewise, participants are not identified by names or their positions in the school. The six participants were given pseudonym names (Leanne, John, Susan, Ruth, Angela and Lucy) to protect their identities, only the researcher conducting the interview knew the participants' real names and other personally identifiable information (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Also, the researcher ensured to minimize the potential risks of privacy and confidentiality by (1) Telling the participants to refrain from using direct identifiers as much as possible during the interview; (2) After the interview, I removed any direct identifiers found in

the audio recording (participants' responses), and substituted them with codes and maintained code keys in a separate secure location, and destroyed the keys and audio recordings after the audio had been transcribed and verified; and, (3) I also minimized the procedures of transferring direct identifiers of the participants between the dissertation advisor and the committee.

To protect the subjects' privacy, a private setting was arranged while seeking the consent of the participants to participate in the research and during the interview sections. I used a safe communication method with the participants, transcribing and reviewing participants' data in a controlled environment. I saved the audio recording with a code only known to the researcher while in use in a secured file and protected participants' personal information from disclosure to others to the extent required by law. An Encrypted Apple iPhone with a screen locked by the researcher's face ID was used for the audio recording of data. The transcription was accomplished by using a transcription app, and then the researcher listened to the audio recording and reviewed the data transcribed. I then saved the transcription on a personal computer with a password only known to the me (secured password). The audio records were destroyed as soon as the transcript was complete and verified. The verified written transcripts were kept in secure storage.

Interview Instruments

The instruments used in collecting data for this study were an interview guide, an audio recording, a notepad and a pen to take notes of participants' responses to the interview questions during the interview. The interview guide questions were formulated questions from the theoretical framework and relevant literature reviewed for this study. The interview guide included three research questions for this study; research question one has six sub-questions, research question two has five sub-questions, and research question three has six sub-questions.

I used the keywords in the theory of equitable collaboration and types of PI models such as decision-making, leadership, advocacy, parents' cultural knowledge, parenting, collaborating, home and school involvement, etc., to raise questions on teachers' perceptions, their challenges, and strategies to achieving those contents with parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs (See Appendix B). I presented the interview guide to an expert in the study of PI for review and necessary corrections to validate the interview questions and to the research advisor. The audio recording enabled me to retrieve skipped information while taking notes during the interview and served as a reference for the research.

Data Analysis

This study used a basic interpretive approach (Meriam, 2002) guided by an inductive analysis method (Ozone, 2020; Thomas, 2006) to understand participants' perceptions of parental involvement of Spanish-speaking ELLs parents. Inductive analysis is a simple and straightforward method of analyzing qualitative data by means of thorough readings of the raw data to identify themes through researcher's interpretations (Thomas, 2006). The inductive analysis approach is used to summarize raw data, establish links between research objectives and the summary from the raw data, and to develop a framework reflected in the raw data (Thomas, 2006). I reported the research findings on each research question using identified categories, including descriptions of the categories and the appropriate quotations from the text to illustrate the meanings of the categories (Thomas, 2006; Williams & Irurita, 1998). Therefore, the researcher adopted the following analysis steps on how to analyze and report research findings using the inductive approach (Ozone et al., 2020; Thomas, 2006; Williams & Irurita, 1998):

1. Transcription: Researcher transcribed the raw data collected from the participants by listening to the audio and recorded in a Word document, then listened again to the audio

recordings and reviewed the writing. I used the transcription app to first transcribe the raw data collected from the participants, then listened to the audio recording and reviewed the transcriptions.

2. Reading: Researcher rigorously and systematically read the transcribed texts over and over until researcher was familiar with the information and considered multiple possible meanings that are essential in the texts.
3. Category label: Researcher identified specific text segments related to the research objectives and labelled the segments of the text.
4. Create categories or themes: The researcher created categories or themes for each research question i.e., (a word or short phrase) relevant to the research objectives to reduce overlap and redundancy among categories and create a model incorporating the most important categories.
5. Category description: The researcher described the meaning of the categories created that are most important and relevant to the research objectives. The descriptions include the researcher's experiences and assumptions on the research objectives and appropriate raw data/ quotations associated with the category to elaborate the meaning of the category and to show the type of text coded into the category.
6. The researcher documented similarities and differences across participants' responses and the implications of their responses for each research objective as well as relationships among categories created.
7. The categories created to identify contradictory views and insights were reviewed.

Researcher's Identity

I am from an African country and have a background in special and inclusive education. I did not have any relationship with Spanish-speaking parents or students. However, I developed an interest in the study of parental involvement in the middle of my Ph.D. program having read literature on PI practice versus teacher training program and thought I could conduct research to build the gap identified in the literature on that concept.

Unfortunately, my research interest in PI and teacher training on PI did not work out, and I later found myself proposing research on PI with Spanish-speaking parents. One of the factors that drove me to this research is because I now live in an area of the U.S. where Spanish-speaking people are the majority population, and I became curious to know what the teachers had to say about this group of parents and their involvement in their children's education.

I believe in embracing diversity and this research is conducted out of the spirit of inclusion with no preconceived views of parents, teachers, or other stakeholders in mind. All of my knowledge gained on this topic of research has been mainly acquired during the literature review process and my interactions with teacher participants for this study. I maintained neutrality throughout the research process.

Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity, and Research Validity

Validating research findings is one of the major components of qualitative research. Maxwell (2005) described validity as "the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account" (p. 106). Maxwell identified validity threats— Bias/subjectivity and Reactivity/reflexivity—as key concepts for validating research findings and that the researcher should identify how to rule out these threats to validate the findings. Some of the ways researchers can rule out research bias is to acknowledge, locate, and

disclose any preconceived beliefs, assumptions, and values the researcher held about the topic research (Holmes, 2020). This process is referred to as "researcher positionality" through "self-reflection and a reflexive" (Holmes, 2020, p. 2). Holmes (2020) stated that "reflexivity informs positionality" (p. 2) and referenced some researchers' explanations that reflexivity requires researchers to be self-conscious and assess their views and positions to see how they might have "influenced the design, execution, and interpretation of the research data findings" (p. 2).

I explicitly reflected and examined my preconceptions about the topic of research, identified the "theoretical views" as the main concept that could influence this research, and tried all possible means to rule out these views in every stage of research such as in participants selection, data collection, and interpretations. I ensured to clarify my preconceptions on the research topic from the research findings and also was open to new information to address subjectivity. I ensured not to dominate the research and the analysis with preconceived theories. I also identified my biases and monitored them in such a way that they would shape the collection and interpretations of the data and use them as distinctive contributions rather than trying to eliminate them (Merriam, 2002). Also, I addressed "reflexivity", which is the researcher's influence on what participants say in the process of data collection that may affect the data.

I was conscious of how not to interrupt participants and how not to discourage them from providing answers to the questions asked. Maxwell (2005) said that "what is important is to understand how you are influencing what the informant says, and how this affects the validity of the inference to draw from the interview" (p. 109). Therefore, I took note of how I may have had an influence on the data and how to deal with it. This researcher understood that the "research is not simply a self-fulfilling prophecy" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 9), and thus examined competing

explanations to my pre-existing knowledge of the phenomena and discrepant data with the best judgment.

There are various methods of validating qualitative research data: member checking, peer debriefing, triangulation, audit trail, reflexive journal/memos, thick description, and prolonged engagement. This research data was validated using “member checking” and “audit trail”.

Member Checking

After I transcribed the data collected, I sent the summary of the transcript to each participant for review, correction, and clarification; this process is called “member checking”. Member checking is also known as “respondent validation” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 111). Maxwell (2005) defined member checking as “systematically soliciting feedback about data and conclusions from the participants” (p. 111). This process enabled participants to review their responses to ensure it is the same information they provided. All of the participants reviewed their transcripts; there were no corrections or clarifications suggested.

Audit Trail

Another method used to validate this research result is the “Audit Trail”. Audit Trail is an in-depth method of validating data in qualitative research. It is also known as a confirmability audit (Wolf, 2003). To check the accuracy of the research findings for this study, the researcher recruited an external consultant called an auditor to examine and assess the accuracy of the research process and findings. The auditor had a Ph.D. in education and knowledge of qualitative research. The researcher provided to the auditor the details of the research, including the transcripts without any participants’ identifiers, the themes developed, research process, data analysis procedures, and researcher decisions. Then the auditor critically examined and

confirmed that the researcher's interpretations and conclusions reflected the raw data and not the researcher's predeterminations. The auditor recruited had no connection with this research.

Conclusion

In the Methodology chapter, I presented the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the research design, which includes information on participant samples, data collection procedures, interview instruments, and ethical considerations in qualitative research. I also presented data analysis procedures and the research validity method for this study. In the next chapter, Chapter IV Research Findings, I present the findings from the teacher participants along with the identified themes, which are supported with the raw data or quotes from the participants.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this chapter, I present the analysis of the data gathered from the six elementary school teacher participants regarding their perceptions of parents' involvement of Spanish-speaking English Language Learners (ELLs). My research goals were to understand teachers' perceptions of the involvement of Spanish-speaking ELLs parents in their children's education, the challenges they encountered in their partnership with those parents, and the strategies they implemented to accomplish equitable collaborations with parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The theoretical framework used for this analysis was equitable collaboration and the six types of PI models.

I presented the themes that emerged from the raw data for each research question. The identified themes were formulated in relation to the research objectives and meaning of the raw data relevant to the theoretical framework. Then, I presented the meaning of the themes that emerged for each research question relevant to the research objectives with the appropriate raw data or quotations associated with the themes. Next, I documented the similarities and differences of participants' responses. Last, I presented the implications of the participants' responses for each research objective and identified contradictory views from participants' responses, based on the inductive analysis steps suggested by (Ozone et al., 2020; Thomas, 2006; Williams & Irurita, 1998)

The inductive analysis approach (Thomas, 2006) was used in the analysis of the data gathered from the participants. I followed the inductive analysis steps suggested by (Ozone et al., 2020; Thomas, 2006; Williams & Irurita, 1998).

After the interviews were conducted, I transcribed the interview responses using transcription software, then listened to the audio recording several times to review and cross-check to determine if the audio version was the same as the transcribed version. Next, I sent the summary of the transcript to the participants for review to see if it represented the information they provided during the interviews. All of the participants responded that the transcriptions were correct; there were no corrections or suggestions provided. Then, I read the transcripts rigorously over and over until I was familiar with the information and considered multiple possible meanings that were essential in the texts. Next, I identified specific text segments related to the research objectives and the theoretical framework and labeled the segments of the text. Then, I created themes relevant to the research objectives, the theory of equitable collaboration, and the types of PI models for each research question. I reduced the overlap and redundancy among the themes created, and then described the themes with theoretical assumptions on the research objectives and appropriate raw data/quotations associated with the themes to elaborate the meaning of the themes. The similarities and differences across participants' responses were documented.

Table 1.

Research Questions and Themes that Emerged from the Raw Data.

Research Questions	Themes that Emerged from the Raw Data
RQI: What are elementary school teachers' perceptions	1. Active/passive parents' involvement in schoolwork at home (multiple jobs, work schedule, limited English,

about parental involvement of parents of Spanish-speaking English learners?	parents' view of school, students' readiness, poor living conditions) 2. Active school involvement 3. Mixed perception of parenting (two groups of parents, multiple jobs, work schedules, living situations, children's lack of sleep, tardiness, absenteeism) 4. Insufficient knowledge and skill of parents 5. Active/passive decision makers and advocate 6. Mixed perceptions of parents' leadership
RQ2: What are teachers' challenges to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?	1. Language barrier resolved with the available interpreter 2. Issues with homework support 3. Issues with parents volunteering in school (Unreliable parents' commitment, appearance in school, COVID-19, and Security) 4. Issues with parenting
RQ3: What are teachers' strategies to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?	1. Communicating strategies (home language for communication, Spanish interpreter, family facilitator staff, staff diversity). 2. Strategies to attract parents to visit the school 3. Strategies to support parents' involvement in the education of their children (literacy program,

	empowerment program, connecting parents to available resources) 4. Strategies to support parents' leadership, decision making, and advocacy 5. Utilizing parents' expertise and cultural capital

Results and Analysis of Research Data

In this section I describe the themes that emerged for each research question related to the research objectives with support quotes from the raw data and relevant literature. I documented the similarities and differences across participants' responses.

Results and Analysis for RQ1

What are elementary school teachers' perceptions about parental involvement of parents of Spanish-speaking English learners? I identified six themes using the inductive analysis process in line with the research objectives, types of PI models and the equitable collaboration framework: (a) Active/passive parents' involvement in schoolwork at home, (b) Active school involvement, (c) Mixed perception of parenting, (d) Insufficient knowledge and skill of parents, (e) Active/passive decision makers and advocate, and (f) Mixed perceptions of parents' leadership.

RQ1, Theme 1: **Active/passive parents' involvement in schoolwork at home**. When teacher participants were asked about their perceptions of how parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs support their children's schoolwork from home, the inference from the participants' responses was that there are two groups of Hispanic parents. One group is educated, knowledgeable,

literate, proficient in English, has reasonable work schedules and actively support their children's schoolwork at home. This group was referred to as "second or third generation". The second group of parents was referred to as the uneducated who were not proficient in English and were mostly new immigrants that were seen to be busy working multiple jobs. The teachers reported that this group was not very engaged or supported their children with schoolwork at home. Some of the participants mentioned that some parents let their children take the lead because of the parents' limitation in English.

Leanne said:

I think this is a struggle with some of the parents, and we are always sending the newsletter and other information, communication in Spanish to help parents so they understand, and they know what to do and what is the expectation.

John said:

My perception is I think it's important for any parent to spend time with their children, even ELL parents with their children and their schoolwork. I think that for ELL parents that are helping their children do schoolwork at home, there can be quite a few challenges. They may, it could be a language barrier for them if they don't speak English and they may not understand what is expected from the child in the homework. Does that make sense?

Susan said:

I think from my experience with the students that I am currently working with, I think their support from my experience, is kind of passive. I may not get any feedback from my parents for a student who is struggling. So, it is my perception that they are supportive, but I think they let their students take the lead, and I say that because I have some

students who are missing assignments or, you know, they may take a few weeks to get assignments done.

Ruth said:

I find most of them who are Spanish speaking to be of two parts. You find a bunch, one half who are very engaged. They are very engaged and knowledgeable enough to want to guide their students and to really help them maximize whatever is available for them to be proficient in English, not to those who are just recent immigrants. They are handicapped in the form that most times you see that they're too busy trying to settle. They are finding it difficult to balance supporting their children with supporting the children's education and supporting themselves. They are busy and not engaged. Here in Texas, you find that they mostly belong to the multiple living houses that insists that they can be three families living in a house. So, you never get to see some of the parents, though. Some of them, maybe one mom is taking care of all the children and all the people are working or one grown-up sibling is the one in the house taking care of everybody or they all just jump in the bus, come to school, and go back. You call, nobody is there to interpret, nobody comes for a parent meeting and not that the kids are not learning, but because they are struggling a lot and there is no love of adult guidance, they easily stray. They get into some kind of crazy and neighborhood miscreants' behavior.

Angela said:

Well, it varies really, because some parents work two jobs, it depends on the parents, some work three jobs. So, for this class 70% of parents help their kids at home. It depends on how the parents see school, because for some parents' school is like a day care, and for some parents' school is like a learning place, so some parents place priority

of their children schooling while some parents do not. How the parents see school. You know even some kids are not ready to learn even if the parents are ready to support, so it all depends.

Lucy said:

I do not know about the assignment who is helping them in the house. Yes. honestly, I don't know how they get it done in their house, but one thing about it is they always bring it back and is always completed.

RQ1, Theme 2: Active school involvement. All the participants perceived that Spanish-speaking parents are actively involved in school activities. They usually attend the school meetings like open house, teacher conference, curriculum night. They usually volunteer for school activities like decoration for school events and volunteer for fieldtrips. One of the participants mentioned that the Spanish-speaking parents do not let their inability to speak English prevent them from coming to school.

Leanne said:

I am so impressed, you know, each year I find that ESL parents are more involved in their kids' lives and they always participate. They always come for all the meetings, open house, curriculum night, and even the fieldtrip volunteer. I always found them very involved and always very enthusiastic and want to volunteer in school.

John also expressed that "...they get involved with school activities and that is important for the children; the children are more involved with their work and in the day, it impacts their learning outcomes. It just helps to build those relationships". He explained further:

It's critical. It's very important for families to be involved in conferences with their teacher. It's important for them to be involved with activities in the school. The children

see that their parents are there, you know, and that if they don't see their parents' importance in education, they're not going to do as well. When the parents are there and their parents are by their side, the children want to come in, they want to learn. They want to work hard. So, they normally show up for the conferences party, I've never had a parent not just no show. And if they couldn't make it, they would call. We would reschedule.

Susan said, "Yeah. I think they come at an event; I usually see lots of parents in attendance you know, they are pretty involved in school activities".

Ruth said:

They are one of the most reliable. If you get them, yes, they participate, participate a lot that they are very committed, ready to do anything, you know, to support the classroom. Yeah, they appreciate the teacher, I mean, like teacher appreciation week is coming up, these would be the ESL students who bring food or gifts for the teachers from their parents to just you know, say thank you. They are very involved yeah…. They are very committed.

Angela said, "Yes, they show up in school events, you know, they are pretty good coming to meetings and school parties".

Lucy said:

As a matter of fact, I think I really commend them despite the fact that they may not actually understand English. Some of them do not understand English. They are very, very supportive. Any time you call them for meetings, they are always there. Anything that concerns our children, they are very much involved. Like many times when we have meetings, we usually have these always Spanish parents. So, they are always very much

involved, anything that has to do with them coming to school. They are always very much involved in many of the activities. I've seen a lot of Hispanic parents show up like one day they go to the extent of even decorating the auditorium, like coming in to decorate, and they are always involved. Like I said, they always participate almost 100%.

RQ1, Theme 3: Mixed perceptions of parenting. When asked about teachers' perceptions of Spanish-speaking parenting behavior, the participants responses were mixed. While some of the participants had no concern with the Spanish-speaking parenting behavior, some had concern. John, Susan, and Lucy's perceptions of Spanish-speaking parenting styles were positive, and they did not have issues. They reported that Spanish-speaking students who learn English as a second language have good behaviors, attend school regularly and work hard. However, Leanne and Angela saw some Spanish-speaking ELLs who were not regular in school or late to school. Ruth expressed having positive perceptions, but then explained that the first group of parents were still trying to settle down in the U.S. and were not meeting the expectations. She said those parents work multiple jobs to earn a living. Ruth and Angela's perception of Spanish-speaking parenting was similar to that of Leanne when she mentioned some factors that are affecting some parents in parenting their kids might be because of their work schedules, like working night shifts or working multiple jobs, which would not allow them to parent well. John expressed the following:

> In my experience thinking back, some of the children I've had over the last couple of years, my Spanish ELLs, parents are involved. There may have been one or two that I don't feel that they were involved, but I think there were other issues going on. But for the most part, those kids are the first in class every morning, they're there, their behavior is good. I don't have a lot of behavior out of them. They come to school, and they work

hard. And ELLs have to work twice as hard as the rest of us. You know they speak English as the second language and they're trying to keep up academically. So, my experience with my ELLs children is a positive.

Susan said:

I would say that's all very positive. I think most of my parents are very supportive of their students getting a good education. That seems to be the norm. I think it's abnormal for any of my students of Spanish descent who don't come to school or miss frequently. Most of my students who are Spanish speaking, they are almost always in school attendance. Attendance isn't an issue. I think they value it and they're; I think the parents are very responsible. I can't say I have many attendance issues with those students.

Lucy said:

Yes, they are actually very effective in that because I hardly have issues with my Spanish kids coming late to school. I also don't have issues with parents picking them, they are right on time. So, parents are making sure that kids are well dressed and coming in at the right time. They are never late in picking up and in dropping them off and they come in ready and prepared for the day. Yes. So, I can actually say the parents are performing their role.

Leanne said:

In that part, I see that a lot of children come late to school, and they frequently miss schools like sometimes the kids overslept. I mean, that happens to all of us but I'm just saying that on a regular basis I see that they were not like ready for the school.

Ruth expressed:

> They do pretty good. I have no problem with that. I find that they make arrangements. They know ahead of time whether they are going to be there or not. They know their child is going by bus. They are pretty organized. That is not a problem at all. You tell them that the only thing is like if they fall into the first group, they work to earn a living trying to settle down. You might not be able to reach them easily because they are not always there. But if it's making sure that the children come to school, that they are there, they come to school.

Angela said:

> I see them perform above average, usually every parent gets their children to school, pick them on time but sometimes you can have single parent that usually drop kids late or pick them up late because the parent might work night job or multiple jobs that intervene with their parents' role, I have seen that.

RQ1, Theme 4: Insufficient knowledge and skills of parents. Teacher participants perceived that most of the Spanish-speaking parents may not have sufficient knowledge and skills to support their children academically because of their lack of education coupled with a lack of understanding of the learning materials or the concept their children are learning and their limitation of speaking English. When asked what teachers perceived about parents' knowledge and skills to support their children's education, Leanne said:

> I should not generalize, but we are Title I school. Like I would say that most of the parents don't know the material that we are teaching, they need help. They seek help. That is very impressive that they ask questions, they seek help, they want to know what's going on, how they can help. They're very helpful and want to support. But I don't think

that they have that skill to help them. And as I said, I should not generalize its case but a lot of time I have found out that or they told me that 'I don't know what that is'.

Like Leanne, John perceived that Spanish-speaking parents do not always have the knowledge and skills required to support their kids academically because of social challenges like the language barrier, and lack of schooling and training. He said, "They don't always have the skills. There can be some social challenges there; there could be language barriers. They may not have the schooling or the training. Yeah, that's a barrier a lot of times". Like Leanne and John, Susan was not so sure if some of the parents had the required knowledge and skills to support their students especially when the students were working on new concepts, i.e., they might not be good at English to understand the assignment. She said:

> It all depends on their circumstances. I think it all depends on their demographics, their socioeconomic background, the home life, all of those things play a part in there. I think 100%, all of my English, my parents, of my ESL students, I think they're all on emotionally, I guess they're supportive, but again, I just don't know that they have the ability to, let's say, sit down and do this homework assignment, if we're working on new concepts, if that makes sense. I'm just not so sure if all of them are able to process these concepts because they might not have those English-speaking skills to help a student with the assignment.

Similar to Leanne, John and Susan, Ruth explained that being a Title I school, the parents may not have enough knowledge and skills. But she acknowledged that the parents do show willingness to gain knowledge and skills. Ruth's statement is similar to that of Leanne's when she mentioned that it was a Title I school and that the parents usually ask for help.

Ruth said:

A lot of time, Title I school parents may not have enough education to support their children, but they show willingness. It depends, parent with higher school or education, some parents even don't go to school, for pre-K it may be easier for parent to help their kids but for higher grade like second grade parents who do not go to school may not be able to.

Angela said:

Most of the parents are very, very limited in English; they do not have the required knowledge to support their kids academically, they struggle, you know, and they are shy to request assistance, you know, their skills are not strong enough to support.

Lucy's response was similar to other participants. She said:

I think the knowledge and skills they have is that parental knowledge of how-to parent and make sure that kids are successful. Because I happen to meet a few parents who actually tell me that they didn't go to school, that they are not learned. They are just maybe skilled workers, maybe they're working in the mail shop and many jobs like that. And so, they don't really have the skills, core skills, educational skills, to actually help their children. And on the other hand, many of those Spanish kids are very smart. So, I think they always go the extra mile for themselves to get things done. I mean, the kids themselves, they actually go the extra mile to help themselves. I know many of their parents are not really skilled or in the aspects of education.

RQ1, Theme 5: **Active/passive decision-makers and advocators**. When teacher participants were asked about what they think about parents making decisions or advocating for their children's education, some participants said they had not come across parents making any kind of decisions. Some said they had experienced it but believed some parents are too timid to

voice their opinions and some parents do not know their children's needs so it would be difficult for them to make any decision on what they do not know. Leanne mentioned that she did not have the experience of parents making decisions about their children's education because the parents were compliant, respectful and listen to the teachers. She said:

> I think that our Spanish speaking parents, they are very compliant in my experience. So far, I did not find that the parents, Spanish speaking parents before I mentioned too, they are very like, they understand. They know that we are here to help their kids and they are very compliant. I have never come across a situation they did not listen to us or not open to our traditions because they were very respectful all the time. They knew that we are here to help their kid and I did not have that experience.

John said:

> I think every parent has the right to want certain things for their children, to want their children to learn in a certain way that every parent has that right. And I have never had an ELLs parent come to me and say, this is how I want my child to learn. This is what I want. I've never had that.

Susan's response was similar to Leanne's and John's, who also had no experience with parents making decisions. She thought parents were of the opinion that whatever the school is doing is good and they kind of go along with the school's agenda regarding their children's education. She said:

> I would say from my experience that if they want resources, I think they're available. I can't say that I have had any parents asked me for additional resources or need. I think most of my parents or all of them, I guess they kind of accept our curriculum. I have to

say, I haven't had any parent who said, oh, I have an issue with this, or I want you to teach something different.

Ruth said:

Again, it depends on the group they fall in. If they are the second generation. Yes, they tell you, I think John is struggling with this, struggling with that. I need support here. Who can help them with this? I have a couple of special education students that they tell you. Johnny don't seem to be doing well. What can I do? why don't you go request for testing to see if it's more than ESL. The first generation don't know their kid's needs. They don't know that because they are still struggling with settling down themselves. They really don't know that there's a problem and even if they identify a problem, they don't have the courage enough or the language enough to ask for what that child needs. So, they're still pretty timid, timid about it.

Angela's response was similar to that of Ruth in terms of having two versions of parents regarding decision-making and advocating for their children' academic needs. She said:

The younger parents who grow up here, they speak up, they are involved, they want to see that children are progressing. They make enquiries, they show lots of interest and concern for their kids, but older ones do not say too much and even if parents speak up the school may not do anything about it.

Lucy responded similarly to Ruth that many of the Hispanic parents do not know their children's needs, so it is not easy for them to make any request. She said:

I really do not think many of those Hispanic parents do that. I happened to be in a meeting sometimes ago with a Hispanic kid. That is a special kid that has special needs. So many times, many of the parents sometimes do not actually even know what their kids

need. So, the main aspect where they need to be educated on what their kids actually need to become more successful. I believe if they know what those kids need, maybe they might be able to advocate for them. But in a situation whereby we have the lack of knowledge to know what exactly that kid needs to become successful. So that might be one way to help them. So many of them, I don't really think many of them have the skills and knowledge on how to advocate for their kids because they don't actually even know what those kids need.

RQ1, Theme 6: Mixed perceptions of parents' leadership. The perceptions of teacher participants about parents' leadership varied. Leanne provided an example of how some of the parents had been involved in leadership positions within the school. John believed it was important for parents to be part of school leadership, but they may feel uncomfortable because of their limited English. Susan was not sure about the parents' leadership. John, Ruth, and Angela responses were similar in saying that only those who are proficient in English can be part of leadership. Lucy explained that any parent can do well in leadership with proper support. The study school has been engaging Spanish-speaking parents to take leadership roles within the school and even empowering and supporting them to develop their skills to become staff members of the school, according to Leanne. She said:

> I think they do an excellent job, truly, I can name like a couple of the parents, they are in fact, several of the parents now, they are permanent employee of our school. They are tutors, they are substitute teachers, they are the aide, special education aide. They are making copies, the tutoring in school during the extra tutoring. They are doing it for the pre-K and kindergarten who still not did not expose to a lot of English yet. So, we do a lot of tutoring with them. So, they are very helpful and are great resources for us. Some

parents, I saw that they went to school and then they had some kind of certification and degree, and we connect them, tell them what they need to do, and they became part of our team.

John said:

I think that's important; I just think about culture, I think about different cultures. I think about if I put myself in that place, if I come from another country, if I didn't speak English, and I was in a school, I think I would feel really uncomfortable. I think that to go into a school and to have the school show interest in my culture and want me to share my culture and to be a part of the leadership of the school would make me feel wanted. It would make me feel important. I think that's very important for schools and school districts to encourage non-English speaking parents to get involved in leadership roles because it does say you're welcome here. You were a part of this school. We want you here and we appreciate your culture. That's my thought on it.

Susan said:

I don't know about a leadership position, and I can't speak on that because I'm not sure whose roles there are, so I can't speak to it. But I've seen, you know, questions being asked, and I've seen them attending school meeting, So I can't necessarily speak to those roles because I'm just not sure.

Ruth said:

I think they relate well with each other. Like I told you, the ones that are proficient in English and are available are used as homeroom mom. We call them homeroom mom, we use them to reach out to those at that school who are not easily reachable, who we think

> they have issues with interpretation, and they do a great job. Ones that are struggling, they are kind of behind. They don't.

Ruth and Angela's responses are similar by adding a clause that only those parents who are proficient in English and educated can perform well in leadership. John said that those who are not proficient in English may feel uncomfortable leading. Angela said that "It depends on their knowledge or education they have or how they see the school. It depends on the parent's ability to communicate. Some of them can do well". Lucy thought if any Spanish-speaking parents have the necessary support, guidance, procedures, and expectations they will do well in leadership.

> I believe any one of them can perform if they have the necessary support they need, if they have the necessary guide, if they know what the expectations are, if they know what the rules and procedures are, yeah, I think they will be able to succeed. But remember, the rules, the expectations, the support, everything must be in place for them.

Results and Analysis for RQ2

What are teachers' challenges to promoting parental involvement of parents of English learners? There are four themes that emerged from this research question: (a) Language barriers resolved with the available interpreter, (b) Issues with homework support, (c) Issues with parents volunteering in school, and (d) Issues with parenting.

RQ2, Theme 1: Language barrier resolved with available interpreter. When I asked the teacher participants about the factors that are limiting their engagement with parents of their students, five of them mentioned language barriers but acknowledged they always get help from the school interpreter. The participants said it's no longer a barrier, but they just need to have someone to interpret for them. This challenge is evidenced in the literature reviewed for this

study (Flynn, 2007; Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). The only participant who did not have an issue with language or communication and did not need an interpreter was the Hispanic teacher, Angela, whose first language is Spanish. This characteristic revealed the power of having diverse teachers and teachers who speak the same language as the parents of their students. The diversity for this teacher aids in improved engagement and relationships with parents. Although the other five participants mentioned that they usually find help from the school interpreter, other staff who speak Spanish, or the family facilitator if they need to speak with Hispanic parents. Leanne said:

> There is a challenge that not all the teachers can speak Spanish, but we have a person or another teacher that speak Spanish. So, we always make sure that we are sending things in Spanish and then someone is there to translate the conversations and any paperwork is already translated in Spanish.

John said that "Factors could be language barriers; it could be just not understating what is expected because we cannot understand each other".

Susan said:

> If there was an issue like there was a language barrier, we have resources. We have Spanish-speaking interpreters who can be present in the meetings. So that wouldn't be a barrier. Because of the demographics of students that we serve, there's multiple Spanish-speaking personnel and staff. So, even if the specific interpreter isn't there, we have Spanish-speaking staff. So, it will be very easy to get someone who can interpret the meeting.

Ruth said:

The biggest issue is communication, but we use interpreters or homeroom moms. Like I said, we use other parents who speak English and speak Spanish or staff members who speak Spanish, or the students. Then, I use Google Translate to translate it and send it home. Now, whether the parents able to read those translations I do not know because I have also heard complaints, that the translations are different. There are lots of Spanish versions. I have Cubans, I have Guatemalans, I have Mexican, I have Puerto Ricans. I have one complaint, that the translation is not correct.

Angela said:

I know some of our teachers who don't speak Spanish have issue communicating with Hispanic parents, they call me, school interpreter or other staff members to help them talk to parents. I have no issue communicating with parents, I speak the language.

Lucy said:

As much as I know, the only challenge I see is just a language barrier. So, a little challenge might just be the language barrier. So, if I have a parent come in and say they only speak Spanish. I actually quickly look for Spanish teachers who speak Spanish and they just join us in the meeting. Our assistant principal speaks Spanish, so I just call her, we also have the coordinator for Spanish as well, she's in charge of those ESL students. So, she is either the interpreter or the assistant principal.

RQ2, Theme 2: Issues with homework support. When asked if teacher participants have any challenges with Spanish-speaking parents supporting their students in completing their schoolwork from home, five of the participants said they have issues with parents supporting their children with homework. They reported that some students are missing assignments

because some parents do not have knowledge of how to support them. Ruth mentioned that even those students who are doing well in school are not getting any help from their parents because of the language issue. Susan explained that Spanish-speaking parents' support of their children to complete homework is kind of passive because they let their children take the lead because of their limited English. John explained issues surrounding parents not helping their children complete homework such as parents' inability to read, and lack of parents' understanding of the concepts and expectations.

Lucy was the only participant who did not have an issue with her students' completing homework, but she mentioned that she did not know how the students were doing the homework. I concluded that maybe her students were mature enough to get their homework done without needing their parents' support because this participant teaches 5th grade math.

Leanne said:

> Yes, I have challenges for kids to do homework at home. We used to give homework but it just they never bring it back. Some kids will complain that they don't have books at home, so they can't read. I try to give them the books. We provide them books also in a Ziploc bag and the books never come back. So, you can tell that oftentimes I mean, not all the time. I said, I should not generalize, but there are occasions that the kids did not bring their book that we provided. So, this is a major thing that they do not bring completed work or the form that needs parents' signature.

John said:

> They're looking at this schoolwork that's in English, it may be phonics and they may not understand what's expected. They may not understand the concepts, they may not be able to read it. Therefore, they can't help a child. So that's a challenge

Susan said:

> I think the parents support for my students to complete their assignment is king of passive, as I said that they let their children take the lead. I have students missing assignments because their parents I think they don't speak English and it is difficult for them to understand the concept.

Ruth said:

> The kids are not able to get their parents to support them, I mean, that's a regular problem Even those that are doing well academically, it's not because their parents help them. Their parents are already challenged with the language. The kids can easily play their parents and say, 'I've done my homework, I did it.' And they will not be able to really check except for very serious students. The students most times do not get that parents support, that is a basic.

Angela said, "we constantly have challenges with parents supporting their kids with their schoolwork at home because of their lack of knowledge; we do have kids not completing their homework, maybe because the parents are not available." Lucy said, "like I said, these kids always make sure they get their work done. I don't know how they get them done in the house but one thing I know is when they come back to school, the work is done".

RQ2, Theme 3: Issues with parents volunteering in school. When the participants were asked about any issues they may have with parents volunteering or attending school activities, they mentioned that some parents, especially second generation ones, show up to volunteer in school events. However, some parents who are first generation are still struggling to settle in the U.S. and do not volunteer in school. Some made commitments to volunteer but were unable to fulfill the commitment—with no call and no show. One of the participants, John,

identified some of the factors that may make Spanish-speaking parents not to volunteer in school. He listed those factors as parents' busy work schedules, multiple jobs, language barriers, and financial issues. He said their inability to speak English may not make them uncomfortable volunteering in school. John also mentioned COVID-19 and security issues may be some of the factors that prevent parents from volunteering in school. Lastly, another teacher participant mentioned that she feels uncomfortable when Spanish-speaking parents come to volunteer in school wearing unacceptable clothing. Leanne said:

> I mentioned that before, that they have been really supportive and they really want to participate but, in some cases, I have seen that they could not keep the commitment they wanted too, for work. They could not follow through all the way, and then could not participate or like no call and no show. They probably signed up for something, but I see some oftentimes no show. So, I know that their willingness was there, but maybe could not.

John said:

> A lot of times it's financial, a lot of times these parents are working, a lot of them work two jobs, they're trying to make ends meet. So, a lot of times their jobs influence their ability to participate in school activities. Of course, there's the safety factor, the COVID thing. Schools are really open like they were before COVID. So, the doors are as open as freely, and again, our schools locked down most of the time for security purposes. And then there's the language barrier, I think a lot of ELLs parents can't speak English very well themselves, so they're less likely to put themselves in a situation that might make them feel uncomfortable. So, they would avoid the situation. So, if they come to the school and they feel like they can't communicate, then they may just avoid coming to the

school altogether. So, those are the factors that's come in that can prevent them from participating.

Susan said:

"I think to the best of my knowledge, I don't have any challenge with parents volunteering in school, although, once in a while parents can miss appointment or come late but that may be due to event that they may not control".

Ruth said:

So, like it like I told you, if they fall into that first group, you never see them. They are never, ever able to attend anything. You call them, they tell you they are busy, they speak to you. I mean, most of the mothers don't even pick up the phone, maybe they think somebody is calling them for a job. But if is the second group which is the ones that are second generation, the second group are very, involved. You find them in everything that you call them. They are much more involved. They ask questions, they volunteer their time, they help, you know, reach out to the others.

Angela stated that "issue is not serious, but you know we demand for students to dress for model, then parents come to school volunteer and the dressing may not be acceptable. For example, night cap on with PJ pant". She also stated that "some parents want to come to school every day to check on students, and it may affect other kids and their presence may be overwhelming.

Lucy said:

They always come; they always show up. So, I don't have problems with that. Although they may sign up to attend physically but they cannot come again because they've had lot of kids, the kid said, 'oh, my momma would love to come for the meeting, but she

couldn't come, and she joined the Zoom.' So, I still like that extra mile. So, we create a line for them to a Zoom link to join as well.

RQ2, Theme 4: **Issues with parenting.** When asked about any challenges with their students' Spanish-speaking parenting, three of the participants—John, Susan, and Lucy—thought Spanish-speaking parents were doing their best caring and nurturing their children and they promoted good behavior in them. However, Ruth said that they do their best but first-generation parents are still trying to settle down and work lots of hours usually give up when teachers contacted them about any concern with their children. Then, Ruth, Leanne, and Angela stated that some Hispanic parents, especially the first generation ones, may not have time to supervise their children at home because they have multiple family systems, work multiple jobs, and night shift jobs, which may affect them getting their children ready for school. Some of the participants reported that some Hispanic-speaking students have attendance issues, missing instructional time because they are sleeping in the classroom as a result of not having adequate sleep at night, and that some Spanish-speaking students have inappropriate appearances in school.

Leanne said:

Another challenge would be like the absences, the attendance, also students coming to school tardy. I mean, that is something that really need to think off. They cannot do that over the year because they have to have certain amount of classroom instruction hours.

John said:

When I think about ELLs and most of our ELLs are Spanish speaking children. The parents are very protective of their children. I can't think of any else that I've had that I thought maybe was neglected at home in any way. I always felt like the parents did the

best that they could. I don't know everything that went on at home, I just remember thinking back how well-behaved my ELLs were most of the time. If that's the case, then if you have well-behaved children in the classroom and they're coming and they're doing their best and they're trying, something good has to be going on at home.

Susan stated, "My interactions have always been very positive, and like I said, even if they can't necessarily help their students academically, they're very supportive of the student getting a good education, doing well in school".

Ruth said:

…the biggest challenge is they basically give up immediately. The first group work a lot; they have a multiple family system. You see that, in that multiple family system, there might be some kind of abuse. They're not there to really know who is going to pick up a lot of crazy behavior, because there's no adult supervision. But when it comes to personally caring for them, providing for them. I think they do their best. Yeah. But because they are trying to settle down themselves, they might not be physically present at all times to supervise their children.

Angela said:

Because parents work multiple jobs or night shift, they are too tired or very late to come home. This affects student's appearance in school, students sleeping in school, 'my mom came very late and have to wait for mom', 'my mom asked me to take care of my sister', the parents over labor children with family responsibility. They live with an extended family and that altered their routine and students sleeping in school loose instructional time.

Lucy said:

> The only one I would actually say is a boy. He comes late to school and is Hispanic. He comes to school almost eight every day and he's older one, so I really do not know what the problem with him is. I spoke to the mum about that, but I've not seen changes and like I said, I think the boy is going through stuff which may actually be that's what is affecting him. But according to the mum, the mom is very supportive because I know the mom.

Results and Analysis for RQ3

What are teachers' strategies to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

RQ3, Theme 1: Communicating strategies. When asked how teacher participants ensure effective communication with Spanish-speaking parents, they mentioned different ways they communicate with them, i.e., by using a school translator, sending newsletters home in both Spanish and English, emailing in Spanish, providing the daily folder to home in both English and Spanish, and using the parents' portal. Some of the participants mentioned that they follow up with any communication.

Leanne said, "The school have a family coordinator that speaks Spanish, and a lot of staff speak Spanish. We can always reach out to them, and they can help communicate with the parents. We send the newsletter and other information in Spanish".

John said:

> The way that I ensure that we have continuous constant communication that I send folders home with the children every day and those folders are to be signed and brought back every day. Any communication that needs to go home goes home in those folders. If

those folders, if any of those children have Spanish only speaking parents, then a Spanish letter or communication in Spanish will go home in that folder. The parents also know that that there are different ways that they are able to communicate with me. They can communicate with me through that folder and through email. They can translate it if they need to, and I can translate it back. If I want to write in Spanish, I'll just copy and paste it into a Google translator. They can call me if they need to. I think I've only had a couple of parents who could not speak English at all, and that in those cases, those parents knew that I would always find a translator if we needed one. So most importantly, the parents knew that I was there and that we will find a way to communicate. They just know if they need me, they can reach out to me. Through the phone and email.

Susan said:

For me, that would like if I have to interact with a parent and I feel like in their Spanish speaking and I feel like they're not like understanding our conversation or isn't beneficial, or they're not getting it at that point. I would just make sure I have an interpreter there because I want to make sure that they understand what we're talking about. So, I would have an interpreter there, translator is there to make sure that my point is getting across and the parent leaves our meeting and we're on the same page.

Susan also mentioned the use of a parent portal for collaborating with parents and passing along all the necessary information parents need to know, like students' IEP accommodation, academic calendar, students' grades, students, and schedules. She said the parents' portal is just a one-stop for parents to access information about their children's schooling. She also explained how she is developing her understanding and learning some common words needed to communicate with parents in Spanish.

Ruth said:

> That's the most important one because like I said, the biggest issue is communication. So, we use those home room moms, we use other parents who speak English and Spanish. We use translated documents, email, translated phone calls as much as possible. Also, the district has paid interpreters. When you think that you cannot afford interpreters for conferences, you use your colleagues, staff members who speak Spanish, Then I use Google Translate to translate it and send it home.

Angela, being a Spanish speaker, mentioned that she uses the parents' portal to disseminate information and displays a sample of students' work for parents to see.

Lucy said:

> My school does a really good job at communicating with them, like sending their parent letter home both in Spanish and in English and many times, if I have to call the parent, I always do that, I don't speak Spanish but look for someone to interact with them.

RQ3, Theme 2: Strategies to attract parents to visit the school. When teacher participants were asked how they attract families to visit school they mentioned different strategies that are relevant to equitable collaboration, such as Spanish-speaking staff who help with translation, i.e., the school interpreters and front desk staff, celebrating Spanish events, maintaining a culturally relevant library, classroom and other school environments, specific teacher invitations, and assigning parent responsibilities. In addition, the teacher participants conveyed they show respect to the parents, engage in mutual communication and collaboration, care for the children, stay in close contact with parents, and demonstrate a positive and inclusive open-door policy. This school and teacher participants use some effective strategies to attract Spanish-speaking parents to come to school, to make them comfortable when calling the school

telephone line and feel part of the community. The school has a front desk staff who speaks and attends to parents in Spanish, either face-to-face or through phone calls. The school also acknowledges Spanish celebrations like Cinco de Mayo and involves parents in the kids' school projects. Leanne said:

> We have staff that translated in Spanish in our front desk, she fluently speaks Spanish, most of the time, I see that she's speaking Spanish because we have a population of Spanish speaking. And then we also celebrate different activities, like Cinco de Mayo coming up, all the other Spanish celebrations. I mean, activities that the kids do in class, we send them, we sometimes ask, them to participate. If they're doing a project, we involve the parents so they can help you know.

John said:

> Well, first of all, for a parent to feel welcome to visit, there needs to be that invitation. They need to know that they're welcome in the classroom at any time. I think giving parents jobs in the classroom and invite them to the classroom parties and just saying, I really could use your help today or this week for this party. I think about culture when parents come in, I think these children need to be able to see themselves in the classroom. The classroom needs to be culturally relevant to them. I think about the libraries need to be culturally relevant. Everything in the classroom needs to be welcoming. It needs to be a safe learning environment and I think just respecting these parents' culture, talking to them, showing that you're interested in their culture, making them feel welcome.

Susan mentioned that the school itself embraces a positive and inclusive policy and that they have an open-door policy, which welcomes all parents. She said,

I feel like our school culture tries to be positive and inclusive and it's kind of an open door, I think, policy for parents, like if they want to come in and meet with a teacher, they always have that ability and that will be a priority. If a parent requests a meeting, then usually within those 24 hours we will reach back out to a parent and have some kind of communication with them to set something up.

Ruth said:

Environment that you try to introduce those things, those kinds of programs where they kind of like those mocha with mom, for instance, that you would have told them ahead of time. Surely moms would know, just not coming to stand around. But you give something to them to drink, eat, to make them feel comfortable. You display their children's work, something to make it presentable for them. Look at a day event, some like Cinco de Mayo, which is next Friday. Now the 5th of May every year is called Cinco de Mayo for the Mexicans is the independence. So, we allow children to dress, we make it a multicultural day, Spanish multicultural. They also have September as Hispanic month. So, they all dress up, take pictures with their parents and all that.

Angela said:

We take advantage of the National celebration Hispanic heritage month, teach culture and value. We celebrate Cinco de Mayo and how they do things and why they do it, we invite parents for different programs too like tea with dad".

Lucy said:

….is actually the way we communicate with them. We keep in close contact with them. Yes. I think, many parents want to see that teachers actually care about their children so that with that, they can actually be a partner with you. And I'm sure most of those

children, there are some things they might actually be telling their parents about the teachers at home. So, when parents are able to perceive that teachers actually care about their children, they want to be involved. So that's the only way I think we actually been able to encourage them and make the school environment. encouraging. And we always let them know that we are working together towards the success of their children, so they know how they want to be a part of it.

RQ3, Theme 3: Strategies to support parents' involvement in the education of their children. When asked the teacher participants what resources and programs are available to parents to enable them to better support their children, they mentioned that the school has a literacy program that is coordinated by a Spanish-speaking family coordinator to develop parents' literacy skills and explained how the school supports some parents of their students to put their educational certificates into use by becoming staff at the school. They also mentioned empowerment programs and the provision of social services such as food for immigrant parents. They mentioned one-on-one consultation with parents to discuss learning expectations and how parents can help. Other strategies identified are an ESL board and brochure for parents' information, provision of translated resources that contained information on how parents can support their children, a parents' forum, and providing advice and encouragement to parents to continue using their home language to their children and expose them to as many English program and activities they can that the home language will help develop English.

Leanne said:

We do have the parents' literacy program, and I know that our counselor also offers something for the Spanish speaking parents. I know that we have a person that directly works with the family, and not only supporting the parents with the school and academic,

but also how they are taking care of the children. In some parents, I saw that they went to school and then they had some kind of certification and degree, and we connect them, tell them what they need to do, they became part of our team.

Leanne also said:

During our conference, I will tell them exactly what the expectation is, how they can help their kids like they make sure that they read 20 minutes each night. If they don't understand something they can reach out to me, and I try to do that one -on-one with each parent because everybody needs is different.

John's response was similar to Leanne when he said that he invites parents to discuss assignment expectations. Another point he made was that he had a plan for the interpreter if needed, and he advises and encourages parents to continue using their native language with their children when supporting them at home. He believes that the use of one's native language will eventually translate to the English language to meet the targeted outcome.

John said:

An example of some way that I would help a parent is to actually have the parent come into the classroom and have a translator and then we would talk about what homework that child has and how the child needs to finish that homework. Also, it's very important that children read 20 minutes every night; I would encourage parents of ELLs students to continue to communicate with their children in their native language, to continue to read books to their children in their native language, because their native language can translate into English. It does translate into learning outcomes. So, I encourage their parents to go ahead and continue that in their home, but to also teach the English as well. So, if parents are having difficulties understanding what is expected in the homework and

what is expected to help the children. I've had parents come in, come into my room. We would sit down and talk together. If we needed a translator, I would bring a translator in from the school.

Susan said:

So, our family facilitator and the school counsellor are in charge of the literacy program. I know the district have literacy program for parents, I don't really know what they do but I know the school have the program and I know some parents are benefitting from it if they want.

Susan also conducts one-on-one consultations with parents either through phone calls, emails, or meetings with the school counselor when needed.

Ruth said:

I guess that's what my district does. Do we have that? Yeah. I told you the ESL parents have some classes, they attend once a month, they go somewhere, they know where they meet and all that. And at the school door, the entrance of the school, they have an ESL board and a nice brochure said for parents' information in Spanish. There's a food department that handles ESL in each stream. We provide them lots of translated resources.

Angela said:

My district has a program for parents to teach them and do other learning like career. I think they do that once a month. They have the opportunity for social service, our family facilitator connects them to food stamps, and they get help for medical, housing, I think. I know they have forums that parents can also use to ask for information.

Lucy said:

> I think the district, there are always different programs. I don't know if this program is actually to educate the parents, but I know many times this actually calls parents to inform them of different things they are doing. So, I'm not sure if there's one that has to do with literacy, and I think they will be. I know they always have a platform to inform them of what is going on.

RQ3, Theme 4: Strategies to support parents' decision-making and advocacy.

When the participants were asked about the strategies, they opted to support parents' decision-making; five of the six participants explained that they collaborate and support parents who identify with their children's needs and make educational decisions. They do this decision-making support in collaboration with any other staff involved in their children's education, like the school principal, counselor, ELL facilitator, or other professionals who had access to the appropriate education for their children. They explained that sometimes they needed to call the awareness of parents to identify the need to make decisions and advocate for their children needs. They needed to ensure that parents and teachers were at the same level of agreement and understanding before they contact other staff and professionals involved. One of the teacher participants mentioned that he stayed in close contact with the any parents involved and monitored the progress of the collaboration. However, one of the participants did not have experience with parents making decisions or advocating for their children and she had no strategy in place to support parents making decisions or advocating for their children. She initially stated in her perception of parents as decision-makers and advocates that the parents were very compliant and respectful, which is why they were not making any decisions.

John said:

First of all, I would identify those concerns. Then I would have a meeting with the parents and sometimes these meetings would consist of other staff members, maybe those in special education. It may consist of meetings with the principal as well. Talking about why we think the child should be tested and this is what we see. And we would show the data, we would show the parents and explain to them why we think the child should be tested. And of course, the child, the parents have to agree to that testing. Once the testing is done, then we hold what is like an art meeting. We held a meeting with the parents and all the staff members involved. And we come up with a plan together on what we think is the best course of action for that child. And we do this all together, collaboratively. And it's an agreement, it's a joint effort. And then as this process and journey continues, we just stay in constant communication, and we monitor the progress of that child. Is that what you're looking for?

Susan said:

That would be those special circumstances. So, if we know a student has needs and they're not being met, then at that point it will be my responsibility to make sure I connect them with the right people and give them what they need if it's additional resources. So, at that point, I would probably be connecting with the counselor and the ESL chairperson, I mean the ELL facilitator. She will probably be able to find out what additional resources we would have available. We kind of do a joint collaboration for resources.

Ruth explained:

> Immediately I find out, a child is having an issue, we call the parent and direct them to the right place, a group of people that will support them. I have few students that's I have seen that it's not just ESL, that they have one issue or the other, maybe special needs. I tell them, hey, why don't you go to the diagnostician, refer them, write the letter. We send them teacher requests for testing, and the parents will say, yes, they didn't pass the test. And it is for that the child has a learning disability and then they put that child in the special education class or provide in-class support for that student to back him up with his or her learning.

Similar to John, Susan and Ruth, Angela expressed how she collaborates with parents to help identify their children's needs and support them make decisions. She said:

> I confer with parents and pointing out may be parent have noticed or have not noticed, so I point out what I observe to parent, we want them to make decision on their children. So, when we notice this and we ask them what they want to do, they will say that I don't know what to do, can you help? The teacher makes necessary support to ensure the children get what they need. We collaborate with parents to let parents know that we want them to take decisions.

Lucy said:

> Yes, I do like I said, I once had a meeting with a parent about a girl that the parent was not sure of what the child actually needed. And I'm glad that we had a specialist in that meeting, and we have the SPED specialist. We had one-on-one, we had me and the reading teacher. So, we actually made our way to the parents. This is what our child actually needs. Because she's not sure what the girl needed, this is what a child needs to

know. The next step for you will be to do this and this, so that's one of the ways which I taught on how to advocate for that girl. The only help we can give is to let parents know the needs and where she needs to go to.

Leanne said:

I think that our ESL, our Spanish speaking parents, are very compliant in my experience. So far, I did not find that the parents, Spanish speaking parents before I mentioned to, I'm sorry, they are very like they understand. They know that we are here to help their kids and they are very compliant. I have never come across such. It was not open to our traditions because they were very respectful all the time. They knew that we are here to help their kids. I did not have that experience.

RQ3, Theme 5: Utilizing parents' expertise and cultural capital. This school makes use of Spanish-speaking parents' cultural knowledge and expertise by inviting parents as guest speakers to speak on race-related concepts, but three of the teacher participants have not tried to use parents' expertise to inform instructions in any way. Angela, Leanne, and Lucy explained how the school as a whole have used the parents' expertise and their cultural capital by inviting parents to school and giving a talk on race topic and how the school also had invited a Hispanic musician to entertain students. However, these three participants have not attempted to use parents' expertise as resources to inform instruction. Angela, Leanne, and Lucy only mentioned what the school had done using their parents' expertise and not what they have done personally. Ruth explained that the state law did not approve that a non-certified person should give instruction to the students in the classroom, but she has used parents as volunteers during school parties and field trips. Only John and Susan mentioned how they have used parents in their

classroom activities where parents bring their traditional food and give a talk on the food to students.

Angela said:

Yes, the school sometimes invite Hispanic parents to school like interview them on a specific topic. The school has invited the Hispanic parents as guest speaker to talk to students about their culture and also learn how they are doing things why they are doing.

Leanne stated, “My school invites parents for interview or something and when we need a guest speaker or something that is related to any of their race or ethnic or cultural something, we will invite them for those”.

Lucy said:

I had never. So that is one thing I might have to know by you saying it, you are bringing my awareness to using them as volunteers in the classroom. I think because of COVID, a lot of things have really happened. And to try to reduce people, a lot of things are going on now. So, schools are also being careful in order to allow to come in the classroom. Although, I know the school has invited Hispanic parents as guest speakers before but that for the whole, and I remember the Hispanic musician the school invited and some other parents dressed up like her, but I have used parents in my classroom to inform my teaching.

Ruth said:

I know that’s what I love because you have all the students in the classroom. Any kind of instruction in the classroom must be of certified trained personnel, that’s a state law. They are however you have them coming to the campus to disseminate information. Like I said, when we have all those cultural days, these moms go and they bring out like last

year we did Sarah Cruz from Cuba, the musician, Sarah Cruz, and some of the moms dressed up like her. I think she's from Cuba, a Hispanic model. They can't do that much in the classroom but as an entire school. We have what everybody's got are in the cafeteria and they do that display but not call them to my classroom to come and teach or do anything. The state laws say that anybody that handles your classes must be a professional and state certified. But again, if you ask me how I have used them, yes, I've used them as parent volunteers as going on field trips. They are there to help you, with guiding the children, helping you have the class party and of yet back to Thanksgiving party that they donated the food, they have to spread it out to the students, they have to clean up. They are there to help you with printing the documents and all this kind of things. Yeah, but not to teach instruction.

John said:

We had an activity in my class. It was second grade, and it was a number of years back where it was a culture. I forget exactly what it was, but we had all of the children's families bring in food from their culture and all the children got to try the food and the parents would come in and talk about their culture a little bit and talk about this food and what was in it and why it was important to them. So, I remember how much the kids loved that and I think it made everyone feel so important and I think it made the classroom so inviting. I could see smiles on the parents' faces and, on the kids', faces.

Susan said:

It's been several times like over the course of the years, I could think of what about the food, the activity that we had in the classroom about, you know, the food from around the

world. The parents would bring food in from their culture, and the parents would talk about their culture a little bit and we would all share in that food and that experience.

Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the identified themes relevant to the research objectives, the framework of equitable collaboration, and the types of PI models. The descriptions of the themes are supported by the relevant raw data from the teacher participants. The similarities and differences in the participants' responses were also documented. The findings revealed participants' perceptions towards parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs that the majority of the parents are active in school involvement, while only those who are educated and proficient in English are the ones supporting their children academically. Some parents do not always have the required skills and knowledge to support their children. Teacher participants also perceived that some Hispanic parents are always busy with work and not meeting up to the expectations in parenting their children. This may be because of the parents' limited English, lack of education, lack of understanding their children's needs, and the inability to make decisions and advocate for their children. While some teacher participants believed that Spanish-speaking parents can do well in leadership with appropriate support, other participants perceived that because of their limited English they may not feel comfortable in a leadership role.

The findings also revealed some challenges teachers are experiencing in their collaboration with Spanish-speaking parents. These include challenges such as language barriers, issues with parents volunteering in school, issues with parenting, and issues with parents supporting their children with assignments.

In addition, the research findings revealed some of the strategies teachers are implementing in their collaboration with Spanish-speaking parents, i.e. communicating strategies

such as: using native language for communication, using a Spanish interpreter, using the family facilitator staff and diverse staff, sending email in the parents' native language, translating phone calls, sending daily folders home using the parents' native language, using a parent portal, homeroom mom, google translate and teachers' personal learning of Spanish vocabulary. Strategies also used to attract parents to visit the school were the use of teachers who speak Spanish as translators, use of school interpreters, celebrating Spanish events, creating a culturally relevant library, classrooms, and other school environments, specific teacher invitations, assigning parents responsibilities, showing respect to the parents, mutual communication and collaboration, caring for the children, maintaining close contact with parents, offering a positive and inclusive policy and an open-door policy.

Regarding the strategies to support parents to become more involved in the education of their children, participants mentioned the provision of literacy programs, empowerment programs and encouragement. The participants also said providing resources, use of native language, connecting parents to available resources, and one-on-one consultation with parents by the specific invitation of the teachers would help parents to become more involved in their children's education.

The strategies to support parents' decision-making and advocacy mentioned by the teacher participants include one-on-one collaboration with parents and other professionals involved, constant communication with parents, monitoring progress, identifying children's concerns, and joint collaboration and decisions. In addition, participants identified how the school and the teachers have utilized parents' expertise and cultural capital. They invite parents as guest speakers, parents give talks on traditional food and culture, and parents volunteer for school parties and field trips.

Overall, teachers' practices are relevant to the equitable collaboration framework perspectives. Apart from that, some teacher participants have misconceptions about parents' decision-making and advocacy and parents' leadership, and that is affecting their practices towards achieving equitable collaboration. Also, some of the teacher participants have not personally attempted to utilize parents' expertise and cultural capital to inform the learning instruction for their students.

In the next chapter, Chapter V, I provide a discussion and interpretation of the research findings relative to the literature reviewed. Also included in Chapter V are recommendations for practice, recommendations for future research, and the study conclusion.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, I present the discussions and interpretations of the research findings for each research question using keywords that appeared in the themes, which emerged from the equitable collaboration framework and types of parental involvement models. The chapter also includes recommendations for practice based on the research findings, recommendations for future research, and the study conclusion.

Discussion on Research Question 1: What are elementary school teachers' perceptions about parental involvement of parents of Spanish-speaking English learners?

The first purpose of this study was to understand teachers' perceptions of the involvement of Spanish-speaking ELLs parents. The themes that emerged in this research are: (1) Active/passive parents' involvement in schoolwork at home, (2) Active school involvement, (3) Mixed perception on parenting, (4) Insufficient knowledge and skill of parents, (5) Active/passive decision makers and advocates, and (6) Mixed perceptions on parents' leadership.

Active/Passive Parents' Involvement in Schoolwork at Home

Parents need to be literate, educated, and know the contents of what their children are learning to be able to support their children's schoolwork from home. They also need to secure jobs that allow them time to support the children, have a positive attitude towards their children's schooling, have access to various resources needed to cater to their children, and have better living conditions. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) suggested some features of equitable collaboration to promote parents' engagement. Among them are literacy education to educate

ELLs parents and enable them to read and write and support their children's education, the empowerment program to build parents' capacity, and get a decent job that will allow them time to have time to parent their children. However, New Profit (2019) reported there is low funding for parents' empowerment programs across United States' public schools.

Another suggestion to promote PI is the connection of parents to the available resources where they can get necessary help, such as housing, medical, and food programs so that they can reduce their work hours and have more time to focus on their children's schooling. Angela mentioned that how parents see the schooling of their children can impact how they support them with their schoolwork at home. This statement is relevant to Hoover-Dempsey's and Sandler's (2010) statement in their PI model that the kind of belief parents hold about their children's learning will have an influence on the children's education. Boonk et al. (2018) also mentioned that parents' positive beliefs and attitudes toward their children's learning are more predictive of higher achievement than behavioral forms of involvement. Parents should always be encouraged to have positive attitudes and beliefs towards their children's schooling. This can be done during parents' meetings or parents' orientation meetings. Involvement, whether home-based or school-based requires strong and collaborative relationships between parents and teachers (Ihmeideh et al., 2018) where teachers need to work collaboratively with parents to provide necessary guidance, support, resources, and information to effectively support their children at home (Flynn, 2007). To sum it up, policymakers also have work to do in promoting home-based parental involvement (Montgomery, 2014).

Active School Involvement

Parents' school involvement is one of the types of PI identified by Epstein (Epstein et al., 2009). Parents' school involvement has been said to improve students' academic performance

(Barnard, 2004; Brownlee, 2015; Jimerson et al., 1999; Kimaro & Machumu, 2015**;** Machen et al., 2005; Park et al., 2017; Venderbleek, 2004); built teachers' and parents' effective relationships (Brownlee, 2015) and that it helped students to develop more confidence and self-efficacy (Machen et al., 2005). This statement is reflected in John's reflection on parental school involvement that it impacts the learning outcomes of the children. All the teacher participants expressed that the majority of Spanish-speaking parents of ELLs are doing their best to attend school events or activities. However, previous literatures on PI have claimed that parents, especially non-dominant parents feel unwelcome in their children school (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Bermúdez & Márquez, 1996; Cooper, 2009; Guo, 2006; Ishimaru et al., 2016; Mapp & Bergman, 2021; Winthrop et al., 2021). For example, Mapp and Bergman (2021) reported that families, particularly non-dominant parents, feel unwelcome in their children's schools because they are not necessarily heard, that educators have negative views about their expertise, and that their cultural capital is overlooked and devalued. The findings revealed that, this school has some effective strategies that attract parents to visits school such as front desk staff that speak Spanish and the diversity of teachers in the school.

Mixed Perceptions on Parenting

Three of the six participants expressed positive perceptions about Spanish-speaking parenting Styles. However, one of the three explained that there are few occasions when he perceived parents were not meeting up to expectations because of other issues. Other three participants expressed negative perceptions of some Spanish-speaking parents' parenting styles, such as not ensuring their children get adequate sleep, which makes students tired and sleep during instruction hours. It also means parents are not getting their children to school on time to ensure regular attendance.

Ruth, in addition to her positive perceptions of parenting, explained that one group of Spanish-speaking parents are very good at parenting and the other group is not. She explained further what could cause those parents not to perform their parenting roles as expected, like parents' busy work schedules or their odd work hours. Parenting involves parents nurturing their children and creating a conducive environment at home that will enhance children's learning (Flynn, 2007). Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) also described parenting as informal activities where parents "contribute to school success such as nurturing, instilling cultural values, talking with their children, and sending them to school clean and rested" (p. 8). Parenting is one of the types of parental involvement said to have effects on students' learning (Wilder, 2014). If the parents are busy with work and do not have time to get their kids to bed at night or get them out of bed in the morning, that will have effects on school attendance and students' performances. Researchers have alluded that good parenting leads to good student attendance (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). The schools need to work together with some parents who are not meeting the expectations on how they can better care for and create time for their children to improve their school attendance, physical appearance in school, and readiness to learn.

Insufficient Knowledge and Skills of Some Parents

All teacher participants perceived that the majority of Hispanic parents of ELL did not have the required knowledge and skills to support their children's education because of their lack of education, limited English, along with a lack of understanding about the learning materials or the concepts their children are learning. Parental knowledge and skills to support their children's education is crucial and lacking these qualities can have an effect on the parents' involvement in their children's education. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (2010) identified that parents' skills and knowledge may influence the activities and academic success of their children. Similarly,

according to Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) the lack of English language proficiency, parents' knowledge of schooling practices, parents' educational level, lack of parents' previous exposure to the U.S. schools' system, parental values, and parents' perception and expectations regarding the roles of teachers and parents have been identified as parental barriers to successful involvement of parents. Arias and Morillo-Campbell stated that these factors can limit parental participation and engagement in many ways such as in helping their children with school assignments and expressing their concerns to the school personnel. The school can support parents to develop their skills and competency to be able to better support their children's education.

Active/Passive Decision-Making and Advocacy

The teacher participants perceived that some Hispanic parents voice opinions because they are educated and they know their children's academic needs, while some parents do not know or those who know are timid about expressing their ideas. Three of the participants do not have specific experience with Spanish-speaking parents making decisions. Leanne explained that the reason why parents are not making decisions on their children's education is because they listen and are respectful and compliant. Two of the participants see Hispanic parents in two groups—one group that makes decisions and one group that does not. The participants' responses revealed that some Hispanic parents engage in decision-making and advocating for their children's education while some parents do not, because they do not really know their children's needs because of their lack of education.

Parental decision-making and advocacy are important parts of the equitable collaboration framework and one of the six types of parent involvement models (Epstein et al., 2009). The framework emphasizes the need to treat parents as experts, decision makers, and as educational

leaders (Ishimaru, 2014; Ishimaru et al., 2016; Mapp & Bergman, 2021). These researchers suggested encouraging parents' leadership participation and decision-making. Mapp and Bergman (2021) stated that in the practice of equitable collaboration, families should have access to the needed information to support their children's learning and be able to act as effective advocates for change. Therefore, Hispanic parents, most specifically those with limited English and education, should be supported and enlightened on the need to familiarize themselves with the U.S. educational system and their children's educational program. They need to understand what their children are learning, what the needed resources are to accomplish those learning objectives, and how their children are learning the contents. This orientation will equip the parents to pay attention to what is working well, what is not working well, and be able to point out any issue or concern in their children's education.

Teachers need to play an important role in ensuring that the parents acquire this knowledge. Teachers' lack of understanding of what decision-making and advocacy mean for parents can also have a negative impact on how they promote it. For example, when Leanne stated that the reason why parents are not making decisions or advocating for their children's education is that they are compliant and respectful. Teachers need to understand the need for "bidirectional communication and shared power" (Ishimaru, 2014; Ishimaru et al., 2016; Mapp & Bergman, 2021) to be able to encourage parents' decision-making and advocacy process.

Mixed Perceptions of Parents' Leadership

The framework of equitable collaboration suggested parents take lead in their children's education (Ishimaru et al., 2016) However, some of the participants believed that parents without English proficiency may not do well in leadership. One of the participants explained that parents who are not proficient in English are used to tutor pre-K and kindergartener students. Only one

participant perceived that any parent could do well with appropriate support. Teachers who did not believe that parents with limited English can do well in leadership would not promote leadership opportunities with those parents.

Supporting parents to take the lead in their children's education and in the school is one of the characteristics of an equitable collaboration framework. Ishimaru et al. (2016) stated that equitable collaborations are built on the systemic change that encourages parents to take up leadership roles in their children's education. Even when parents are not literate or have insufficient education, they can still be supported by providing them literacy and educational opportunities (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). Lucy believed every parent can lead with appropriate support.

Discussion on Research Question 2: What are teachers' challenges to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

During this research I also sought to understand the challenges teachers were experiencing in their attempt to involve Spanish-speaking ELLs parents in the children's education. The themes that emerged are: (a) The language barrier resolved with available interpreters, (b) Issue with homework support, (c) Issues with parents volunteering in school, and (d) Issues with parenting.

Language Barrier Resolved with Available Interpreter

All the participants acknowledge that there is a language barrier, even the only one participant who speaks Spanish explained how she used to help other teachers communicate with parents. They explained different ways they are addressing the language barrier, like having someone translate—a school interpreter, homeroom moms, other staff and students, and sending messages home in Spanish. The language barrier is one of the major challenges that prevents

parents from getting involved in their children's education (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Cho & Votava, 2021; Flynn, 2007). Therefore, researchers suggested that the notice to home should be written in the family's native language and arrange for interpreters during parents' conferences or use the parents' extended families to assist in home-to-school communication (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Flynn 2007). Angela explained how she uses a selected group of Spanish-speaking parents who are proficient in English, called homeroom mum, to help communicate with other parents with limited English. This can be an example of what Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) called "parents' extended families". Building relationships among parents through sharing a feeling of solidarity and mutually supporting each other around common challenges within the educational system can help parents build their knowledge and skills while developing strategies and leadership for systemic change (Ishimaru, 2014).

Issues with Homework Support

Regarding the issue of homework, only Lucy did not have an issue with the homework and the reason was that her students are in 5th grade, and they are able to complete their homework by themselves. She said she does not know how the students are completing their homework, but she perceived those Hispanic parents make their children take the lead.

Some of the factors that participants mentioned that are impeding parents from supporting their children in completing homework assignments are the lack of parents' education, limited English, and the lack of understanding the lesson concept and expectations. Researchers have suggested provision of literacy program for parents to enable them to support their student academically (Arias & Morillo-Campell, 2008; Winthrop et al., 2001).

Issues with Parent Volunteering in School

Some of the participants have issues with parents volunteering in school such as when parents made a commitment that they were unable to fulfill, because they are busy with work and cannot make it to school. Angela mentioned the inappropriate appearance in school (dressing style) of some parents. Some participants also mentioned COVID-19 and the security issue in school that prevents parents from volunteering in the school. Participants mentioned that parents' inability to attend school events or to meet the commitment made, are sometimes a result of their work schedules. Arias and Morillo-Campell (2008) stated that logistical issues such as inability of ELLs parents to attend school meetings, conferences, and open house events may be because of their labor-intensive work schedules. The researchers suggested that schools need to work with parents' schedules and see how they can modify the school events or activities.

Issues with Parenting

The last issue mentioned by three of the participants was the parenting issues. They mentioned that some children are not parented well. They see some Hispanic students coming late or are frequently absent from school. Some Hispanic students sleep during the lessons because they do not get enough sleep at home. Lucy mentioned one instant of a student who frequently comes late to school. Later she discovered, after her interactions with the parent, that it is not the parent's fault that the boy has some other issues going on with him. The participants mentioned some of the factors that could cause these behaviors such as parents' busy work schedules or work hours like working overnight, going home late to get their children ready for school, and multiple family living conditions where one parent takes care of many children or where older children are responsible for younger children from the extended family.

Winthrop et al. (2001) provided examples of the circumstances experienced by some parents as working multiple jobs, having multiple children to care for, etc. While Mapp and Bergman (2021) referred to teachers' perceptions of parents as "too busy" because they work multiple jobs as teachers' deficit mindset and negative reactions towards families. According to Epstein et al., (2009), parenting is one type of PI and is an important factor that can easily affect children's education. Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) described parenting as informal activities where parents "contribute to school success in terms of informal activities such as nurturing, instilling cultural values, talking with their children, and sending them to school clean and rested" (p. 8). Some of the participants observed some students who looked unrested and were not ready for learning instruction. Researchers have indicated that effective PI improves students' attendance in school (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Bralerick et al., 1999; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Winthrop et al., 2001).

Discussion on Research Question 3: What are teachers' strategies to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

This research also aimed to identify teachers' strategies to promote PI of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The following themes emerged from the study and are addressed below: (a) Communicating strategies, (b) Strategies to attract parents to visit school, (c) Strategies to support parents' involvement in the education of their children, (d) Strategies to support parents' leadership, decision-making, and advocacy, and (e) Utilizing parents' expertise and cultural capital.

Communicating Strategies

Research findings revealed some effective strategies that are useful in promoting communication, such as the use of both Spanish and English language for various forms of

communication. The school has a Spanish interpreter who helps teachers with communication, a family facilitator staff person who connects parents to needed resources, and more staff who speak Spanish and help in communicating with Spanish-speaking parents including the front desk staff. Susan said, "….because of the demographic of students that we serve, there's multiple Spanish-speaking personnel. Even if the specific interpreter isn't there, we have Spanish-speaking staff. So, it will be very easy to get someone who can interpret the meeting". The teachers send emails in both English and Spanish to parents, they use translated phone calls, daily folders sent home, parent portal, and use of homeroom mom (Hispanic parents who are fluent in English). All these activities are related to the strategies Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) suggested as effective strategies to promote PI.

Strategies to Attract Parents to Visit School

Teacher participants mentioned some strategies they adopted to attract parents to visit the school, such as positive and inclusive policies, open-door policy, front desk staff that interact with parents in Spanish, the use of interpreters, celebrating Spanish cultural events, culturally relevant library, classrooms, and other school environments, specific teacher invitations, assigning parents responsibilities, giving respect to parents, mutual communication and collaboration with parents, caring for the students, and close contact with the parents.

Mapp and Bergman (2021) identified some families challenges to ELLs parents' engagement as feeling uninvited to contribute to their children's education and the feeling of disrespect, unheard and unvalued by the school. Two of the teacher participants mentioned specific teacher invitations to make parents feel welcome and one participant mentioned showing respect to parents to make them visit school. The equity form of collaboration is built on mutual trust and respect (Green et al., 2007; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2010; Mapp & Bergman,

2021; New Profit, 2019; Winthrop et al., 2021). Mapp & Bergman (2021) then suggested that teachers practice cultural and responsive collaborations, create a welcoming school culture, and build mutual respect and trust with parents. Similarly, researchers have also identified some factors that may influence parents' involvement like welcoming attitudes of the school staff, such as custodians and the front desk staff, and a responsive atmosphere (Green et al., 2007; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2010).

Strategies to Support Parents' Involvement in the Education of their Children

The framework of equitable collaboration explains that the school needs to connect parents to resources that will help them support their children's education. So, when I asked the teacher participants what resources and programs were available to parents to enable them to better support their children, they identified some strategies like the provision of literacy programs, empowerment program, encouragement to parents, provision of needed resources, encouraging parents to continue to use their native language, and also expose children to more English activities, which will eventually help their English skills. Some of the participants also mentioned that they connected parents to available resources and conducted one-on-one consultations with parents to discuss their children's academic needs, how to achieve those needs, and informed them of the academic expectations of their children. Leanne, John and Susan mentioned that they send specific invitations to parents if needed to support their involvement in their children's education. In Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (2010) Model of PI, they identified the "specific teacher invitation" whereby the teacher requests to parents for supporting learning at home or attending a parent-teacher conference will have an influence on the parents' participation compared to no request at all. New Profit (2019) research revealed that parents are always ready to get into the school system if they are invited. The research

participants have different ways they support parents, who in turn better support their students academically, as well as financial and career support.

Strategies to Support Parents' Leadership, Decision-Making and Advocacy

Parental involvement includes parents being part of decision-making in their children's school, selecting learning goals for their children, collaborating with their children's schools, teachers, and the school community to improve students' learning and well-being (Caño et al., 2016; Nye et al., 2006; Winthrop et al., 2021). Parental decision-making and advocacy are parts of the PI Model by Epstein (Epstein et al., 2009) and one of the factors that determines mutual collaboration between parents and schools/teachers (Mapp & Bergman, 2021). The Epstein model acknowledged bidirectional communication and encouraged schools to develop avenues for parents' ownership within the school through shared decision-making; the model also works towards empowering parents to have a voice in their children's education *(*Bower & Griffin, 2011).

The participants identified some strategies to support parents' decision-making and advocacy, like one-on-one collaboration with parents to discuss their children's needs, to request a joint effort with the parents to pursue those needs, and direct parents to the appropriate personnel to assist in the provision of those needs. The teacher participants also mentioned that they collaborate with parents and other staff involved, like the school principal and school counselor, to support parents to make decisions on their children's education. One participant mentioned that he engages in constant communication with parents and monitors the progress to ensure that everything needed has been taken care of by the personnel involved.

Five of the six participants in this research expressed how they support and collaborate with the parents to make decisions on their children's education. Leanne, however, had no

strategy for how she could support parents in making decisions and advocating for their children's education. Researchers identified that teachers' perceptions of PI can either promote or inhibit effective practice (Booth & Dunn, 2013; Flynn, 2007; Guo, 2006; Tichenor, 1997; Wassell et al., 2017). Leanne perceived parental decision-making as non-compliant and lack of respect. This perception has negatively influenced her practice of supporting parents to make decisions on their children's education.

Utilizing Parents' Expertise and Cultural Capital

The study school makes use of Spanish-speaking parents' cultural knowledge and expertise by inviting parents as guest speakers to speak on race-related concepts. However, three of the teacher participants have not tried to use parents' expertise to inform instructions in any way. Leanne, Angela, and Lucy had not used parents' expertise and their cultural capital in their classroom, but they acknowledge how the school itself had used parents' cultural capital and expertise in the school-wide events. Only John and Susan attempted to use parents' cultural knowledge and expertise in their classroom. Ruth mentioned that only those who are certified can teach students in the classroom and Lucy mentioned COVID as a restriction for the use of parents' expertise in the classroom.

Researchers have emphasized that ELLs parents' experiences, expertise, and cultural and linguistic knowledge can positively influence children's education when educators view them as resources for students' success (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008; Good et al., 2010; Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Also, the framework of equitable collaboration suggests that schools should recognize parents' expertise and use them as resources in curriculum implementation (Mapp & Bergman, 2021). However, Bergman claims that the non-dominant parents feel unwelcome in their children's schools because of the negative views schools have on the parents' expertise and

how the parents' cultural capital is overlooked and devalued by the school (Bergman, 2021). Those claims are not present in the practices of this school.

To a certain degree the school/teacher participants' practices in this study are relevant to the equitable collaboration framework perspectives. The equitable form of collaboration is in practice when the expertise of families, their strengths, differences in language, cultural practices, and their experiences in and out of the school are realized and tapped into as resources by educators. It is also in practice when educators connect parents to the institutional resources training and workshop, and knowledge needed; it is when parents are encouraged and supported to make decisions and advocate for their children as well as to take lead in their children's education (Ishimaru et al., 2016; Ishimaru et al., 2019). Similarly, Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) described Non-Traditional Models of PI for English Language Learners (ELLs) to include all the features of equitable collaboration framework that involve "developing a reciprocal understanding of schools and families that situate in cultural strengths of family and community within the school curriculum, parental education, parent advocacy and decision-making, parental empowerment, and validating the parents' cultural capital and their funds of knowledge" (p. 11).

The non-traditional model of ELLs PI initiated a family literacy program to teach ELLs parents how to read and write and learn other literacy skills that they can use in supporting their children (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). The study school understands the type of population they are dealing with and makes the necessary effort to work with them collaboratively and support them to help their children succeed. For example, Susan said, "So, because of the demographic of students that we serve, there's multiple Spanish-speaking personnel and staff. So even if the specific interpreter isn't there, we have Spanish speaking staff. So, it will be very easy to get someone who can interpret the meeting". The school promotes communication between

home and school for Spanish-speaking families by having a Spanish-speaking administrator at the front desk, a multilingual telephone home-work line, and sending newsletters home in both Spanish and English (bilingual newsletter). The school has family facilitator staff who help family, most specifically the Spanish-speaking parents, with necessary needs and connect them to available resources in the community such as housing and medical support. The family facilitator also makes possible the family literacy and empowerment programs for parents. Leanne mentioned that some of the parents are now staff of the school, working as substitute teachers, nutrition staff, and security staff within the school. The work schedule within the school premises for parents allows them more time to support their children's education, unlike night job hours. The school has a designated Spanish interpreter and bilingual staff available in school to help interpret. The school acknowledges parents' cultural capital and expertise by inviting parents as guest speakers for relevant events in the school, including annual Spanish events.

However, the school and teacher practices are not without deficit. For example, Leanne has yet to understand what decision-making and advocacy means for the parents. She misunderstood parents' decision-making and advocacy as a lack of compliance and disrespect to teachers. This misconception can hinder the realization of parents as decision-makers and advocators. Also, Leanne, Ruth, and Lucy have yet to use Spanish-speaking parents' cultural capital and expertise in their lesson instruction. They did acknowledge, however, that the school does embrace and utilize parents' cultural capital and their expertise. Researchers have argued that teachers' perceptions of PI may possibly serve as institutional structures for PI practice (Wassell et al., 2017) and can either promote or inhibit the effective practice of PI (Booth & Dunn, 2013; Flynn, 2007; Guo, 2006; Tichenor, 1997; Wassell et al., 2017).

Recommendations for Practice

The recommendations for practice of parental involvement (PI) for Spanish-speaking parents of ELLs presented here are the combinations of effective strategies the school and the teacher participants for this study have been implementing to achieve mutual collaborations and engagement with parents, solutions to challenges those participants identified, and other strategies they implemented to achieve equitable collaboration with parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs as suggested by the literature.

(1) Promote Diversity in Teaching Force: Schools that have a diverse student population should promote diversity among teachers' personnel because of the important benefits that same-race teachers with students have on students' success (Gershenson et al., 2021). One benefit of having diverse teachers serving diverse students is that students will benefit from the various cultural knowledge and experiences teachers bring into the school environment (Sleeter & Milner, 2011). Also, Kyles and Olafson (2008) stated that teacher candidates with multicultural schooling and life experiences are more likely to have more favorable beliefs and attitudes regarding cultural diversity than candidates with monocultural schooling and life experiences. One of the study participants was an African American female who was also an English learner, and she conveyed that she understood the parents better because English was not her native language. Gershenson et al. (2021) stated that teacher diversity helps close the achievement gaps and promote equity goals and reported some evidence-based research on students having a same-race teacher to have improved students' performance. However, the majority of U.S. public school teaching forces are mainly homogenous white while student populations are highly diverse (Gershenson et al., 2021). Contrarily, this study school has teaching and non-teaching staff from different parts of the world. The school has specifically teachers, administrative and

utility staff whose first language is Spanish. Susan said, “because of the demographic of students that we serve, there’s multiple Spanish-speaking personnel and staff. So even if the specific interpreter isn’t there, we have Spanish-speaking staff. So, it will be very easy to get someone who can interpret the meeting”. Upon entering the school there is the front desk admin staff who speaks Spanish. This arrangement makes the school more welcoming to the parents; it makes it easy for Spanish-speaking parents to feel comfortable coming to school knowing that they have someone to communicate with in their native language. Also, the teachers who don’t speak Spanish are able to use other staff members who speak Spanish when there is a need to communicate with Spanish parents and the school interpreter is not available. Gershenson et al. (2021) suggested that state boards of education, policymakers, and school leaders should see teacher diversity as an element of teacher quality and always put it into consideration in the teacher recruitment process and teacher education programs.

(2) Provide Adequate Interpreters: The research setting for this investigation has only one professional Spanish-speaking interpreter who works with teachers when they need to communicate with Spanish-speaking parents. Although, the study participants mentioned that sometimes the school interpreter is not available, and they may have to use other school personnel or students who speaks Spanish to help them communicate with parents. However, the idea of using other school personnel or students to interpret may not always work when the personnel or students are not available. Therefore, schools need to provide sufficient school interpreters who can serve the school’s entire population.

(3) Provide Formal Education on Parental Involvement: According to the demographic questionnaire completed by the study participants, none of them had formal education on parental involvement (PI). This finding is relevant to the literature on the lack of teacher training

on PI (Booth & Dunn, 2003; Flanigan, 2007; Flynn, 2007; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1999; Walker et al., 2002; Winthrop et al., 2021) and those researchers suggested the need to include PI training in teacher education preparation to provide teachers adequate knowledge, skills, and strategies on how to collaborate with parents of various backgrounds. Although, the teacher participants stated that they have an endorsement in English as a second Language (ESL) and receive continuous professional development on the job at least twice a year on the topic of parents' inclusion. However, having a formal education in PI would go a long way in its implementation.

(4) Provide Support for Parents' Advocacy and Decision-Making: All teachers need knowledge of what it means for parents to advocate or make decisions about their children's education as well as how to support parents to do so. One of the participants in this study thought that parents who make decisions or advocate for their children's education needs lacked respect and was non-compliant. Also, other teacher participants mentioned that Spanish-speaking parents do not have the attribute of advocating or making decisions about their children's education because they do not know exactly what their children need, and even if they did know or were aware of the needs, they would find it difficult to discuss with their children's teachers or school. In addition, one of the participants mentioned that even if parents made decisions or suggestions, the school may not listen to them. Previous research has revealed that teachers have the lowest agreement with parents' role as the decision makers (Ihmeideh, 2018) and also that schools have overlooked and devalued parents' expertise, which is preventing them from involving parents in decision-making on how to educate their children (Mapp & Bergman, 2021). Therefore, teachers need to be educated on the need for parents' decision-making and how they can support them. Schools as well need to listen to parents' voices and support them to know what their children's

needs are. Teachers need to support parents' as advocates, leaders, and decision-makers on their children's education. Athanases and De Oliveira (2008) explained that teachers, most specifically those who work with English Language learners, should increase their advocacy acts for their students in collaboration with the parents and possibly launch a bilingual parent group. Similarly, Cho and Votava (2021) suggested that schools organize parent workshops about advocacy and leadership orientation. At least four of the participants in this study explained how they support Spanish-speaking parents to advocate for their children. Once they see students' needs, they contact parents to ask if they noticed the same needs. Sometimes the parents are aware but do not know what to do or where to go, and sometimes they are not aware. So, after the parents and teacher discuss the issues and they are at the same level of understanding and agreement, the teachers connect the parents to the appropriate personnel who will help them, and teachers follow up with the parents.

(5) Provide Frequent Orientation for both Teachers and Parents: Ongoing orientation should be provided to teachers to improve cultural knowledge of their students, continuously equip them on how to promote dual relationships with parents, and how parents should engage in the relationship without hesitation or being timid. The parents' orientation should also discuss the importance of their children's schooling and why they need to support and get involved in their children's education. Angela mentioned that parents' involvement is affected by how each parent sees the schooling of their children. The teacher participants mentioned that sometimes parents are aware of the needs of their children, but they are too timid to approach the teacher. Even when teachers approach them to discuss any noticeable issues in students, the parents may sometimes say that they do not know what to do, and sometimes the parents give up. One of the participants stated that the parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs easily give up when issues arise

with their children's education. They sometimes stop the children from coming to school. The orientation for parents should address why parents need to be confident in themselves, why they need to be strong, why they need to voice their opinions and concerns and make decisions about their children's education, and why they need to advocate for their children.

(6) Provide Empowerment and Literacy Programs and Connect Parents to Available Resources: Parents need to be empowered, literate, and have access to needed resources to better support their children and engage in their children's education. For example, literacy programs will help parents in supporting their children with homework. Empowerment programs will help make connections to available resources, which can aid their parenting. Among the factors identified that are preventing parents from involving themselves in their children's education are lack of education, their inability to speak English, and their multiple work schedules. The study participants gave different examples of how their parents are empowered, like becoming substitute teachers and nutrition staff. They also mentioned the available literacy program for parents to improve their literacy skills and how parents who are struggling financially are connected to where they can get help, i.e. medical payments, food stamps, dentist, and accommodations. When parents and their children are comfortable, they will be well-focused and accomplish what they need to do. The issue of parents working multiple jobs to earn a living affects their involvement in school and/or prevents them from succeeding at their parenting roles.

(7) Modify Parent-to-Teacher Meeting Schedules: The research findings revealed that some Hispanic parents of ELLs sometimes miss scheduled meetings or are not able to keep their commitments to volunteer in their children's school. It is sometimes "no call and no show". Therefore, schools/teachers should ensure to work with parents' work schedules and modify

meetings to accommodate them. One of the participants mentioned that she is really flexible with meeting parents by giving options of in-person and Zoom meetings.

(8) Provide Childcare Opportunities: Another reason why parents may not be able to attend school meetings or fulfill volunteering commitments is because of childcare issues. They may have multiple children to take care of (Winthrop, 2022). For example, Lucy mentioned that some parents are not able to fulfil their scheduled meeting with the teacher because they have kids to care for. Researchers have suggested that the provision of childcare increases parents' attendance at any school events (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

(9) Promote Two-Way Communication with Parents: Teachers foster two-way communication by not only providing information to parents but also by listening to them to hear their input. One of the teacher participants response when he was asked about his challenges with parents' decision-making, said, "I don't see any challenges there. I feel that for the most part, all of my ELLs parents are supportive. They're open to listening to the school and the teacher, I think that they trust the school". When parents listen to teachers, teachers, as well, should listen to them.

Recommendations for Future Research

Almost one-half of the study school's student population are Hispanic and from low-income families. And almost one-half of the student population is learning English as a second language. Therefore, future research could investigate teachers, perceptions of Parental Involvement (PI) for Spanish-speaking parents of English Language Learners (ELLs) at a high-income family school with a low number of Hispanic students for comparison.

Another suggestion for future research is to explore parental involvement of Spanish-speaking English Language Learners for each grade level. The result of this research indicated

that parents' involvement for each level varies and the students in lower grades, like kindergarten, may need greater parent involvement than higher elementary levels, like 5th grade. In fact, the result of this study revealed that the 5th grade teacher participant, Lucy did not have many issues with her students regarding their parents' support while the lower levels have much concern, especially about completing homework. Researchers have confirmed that parents' roles and activities gradually and developmentally change as the students' progress by grade level (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2010).

In addition, there may be a need to conduct research to understand the details of all the programs available to support Spanish-speaking parents in this school and the district as a whole. The majority of the participants were aware of the programs available for the parents, like literacy, social welfare, and the empowerment program, but they were not sure of what the programs entailed and how the parents were benefiting from those programs.

Conclusion

This investigation took place at a Title I elementary school consisting of about one-half of the student population learning English as a second language where the majority are Spanish-speaking. The school is located in the North Texas area. This study has identified teacher practices of parental involvement relevant to an equitable collaboration framework. The research has also highlighted teachers' perceptions of specific types of parental involvement models and equitable collaboration agenda, challenges teachers experience in PI practice, and strategies adopted to achieve equitable collaboration with Spanish-speaking parents of ELLs.

Based on the research findings, this school and teacher participants can be said to have a practice of PI that is somewhat relative to an equitable collaboration framework. For example, they use dual language in disseminating and communicating with Hispanic parents, show respect

to parents, make the school environment more welcoming to parents, i.e. have a front desk Spanish-speaking staff person and Spanish interpreter in the school, and operate on an inclusive and open-door policy.

The communication practices in this school are in line with suggestions from previous literature. The literacy and education programs are in place to educate parents to better support their children academically. The empowerment program for parents is in place, and the social and welfare services are available to help parents with basic needs, relieve them from working multiple jobs in order to have time for their children and be more involved in their education.

However, some teacher participants' perceptions and practices relative to parents' leadership, decision-making, and advocacy, as well as utilizing parents' expertise and cultural capital are still immature. For example, some of the participants perceived those parents with no English skills may not feel comfortable or function well in leadership and this perception may determine how they promote parents' leadership. Also, one of the participants perceived parental decision-making and advocacy as a lack of respect and non-compliant act and this perception has affected how she supports parents to make decisions and advocate for their children. Three of the teacher participants had not personally used parents' expertise and cultural capital to inform instruction. I perceived that some teachers may need knowledge of what leadership, decision-making, advocacy, and parents' expertise and cultural capital mean and how they can better support parents in these regards. Researchers believe that teachers with a positive belief that parents can contribute meaningfully to the academic achievement of students and those with robust teaching efficacy have a tendency of promoting PI (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). The researchers also stated that immigrant parents do not know how they could advocate for their children's schooling and use academic opportunities because of their limited schooling

experiences (Isik-Ercan, 2012). Therefore, “educators, community agencies, and policy-makers should promote advocacy for the whole family so that the parents might provide stronger leadership in their children’s education” (Isik-Ercan, 2012, p. 3025).

After conducting this investigation, I concluded that teacher training on PI, provision of literacy programs, empowerment programs, parent orientations, a welcoming school culture, consideration of parents’ work schedules regarding school meetings, provision of childcare, and connection of parents to available resources will ameliorate most of the challenges identified by the teacher participants in this study. Ultimately, providing these services to parents will have a positive impact on their children.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Demographic Questionnaire

Instructions: Please respond to these questions as applicable to you and your work. Thank you for your participation in this research.

Demographic Questions	Responses
1. What is your race and ethnicity?	a. American Indian or Alaska Native b. Asian c. Black or African American d. Hispanic e. Native Hawaiian f. White g. Other_____
2. a. What is your primary language? b. What other language than English have you learned, or do you speak?	_____ _____
3. What is the highest degree you have completed?	a. College b. Bachelors c. Masters d. PhD
4. a. What is your specialty? (Academic background).	

b. Do you have a certification or endorsement to teach ELLs?	
b. What formal education or continuous professional development training do you have working with Spanish-speaking parents and their children? Please, list them.	1 _____ 2. _____ 3._____ _____No education/training
5. a. How long have you been teaching? b. How long have you been working with English Language learners (ELLs)? c. How many EL students do you usually have? d. How many EL students you have currently?	a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____

Appendix B

Research and Interview Questions

RQ1. What are elementary school teachers' perceptions about parental involvement of parents of Spanish-speaking English learners?

a. How do you think parents of Spanish-speaking learners support their children's schoolwork at home? (Home Involvement)
b. What do you think about Spanish-speaking parents' ability to support their children completing schoolwork? (Knowledge and skills).
c. What do you think about them doing their parents' roles like getting their children ready for school on time and regularly, picking them up at school etc.? (Parenting).
d. What do you think about parents making choices for their children or saying what education or resources they want for their children (decision making or advocating)?
e. How do you think parents of ELLs help in the school or classroom activities? (School involvement e.g., volunteering in school activities, parents' conferences, and other school events)
f. How would you think Spanish-speaking parents of ELLs will perform if they are in leadership positions in the school? (Parents as leader)

RQ2. What are teachers' challenges to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

a. What are factors limiting your collaborations with parents of Spanish-speaking learners e.g., communication, parents' attitude to their children schooling?
b. What are the challenges you are experiencing with parents caring for and nurturing their children that will have an impact on their schooling?

c. What are the challenges you are experiencing with parents' decision making on their children's learning?

d. What are the challenges you are experiencing with parents volunteering, or attending events at school?

e. What challenges are you experiencing with parents supporting their children with schoolwork at home?

RQ3. What are teachers' strategies to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners?

a. What do you do to make a school environment, classroom, a place parents like to visit? (Welcoming school culture and environment).

b. What strategies do you use to make parents support their children's schoolwork at home? (Home involvement)

c. What resources and programs are available to parents to enable them to better support their children with their schoolwork?

d. What type of leadership opportunities have you involved parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs in the school or community? Can you provide example (Leadership)?

e. How do you support parents to make educational choices or make a case for their children's learning? (Decision making and advocacy)

f. How do you utilize parent abilities in your teaching of their children? (Parent skills, language, experiences, expertise, and cultural capital)

Appendix C

Permission to the Research Field

The researcher removed the school and principal identifiers from the email response.

The teachers' emails are on the website, so you can contact them directly via email and let them know what you're doing. They can decide if they want to participate. I'm sure you will have several who would love to assist you,

Thank you!

Appendix D

Invitation Letter to Potential Teacher Participants

01/26/23

Dear teacher

You are invited to participate in research titled:

Parental Involvement for Spanish-speaking English Language Learners (ELLs): Teachers' Perspectives

I am conducting six teachers' interviews for my dissertation research study to increase understanding of how teachers perceived parental involvement for Spanish-speaking ELLs parents. I think you are a good fit for this research, and you will provide valuable information as a teacher who has experience working with ELLs and their parents. The interview will take a minimum of 1 hour and maximum of 2 hours and it will be less formal in nature.

Please, note that all your personal identification will be kept confidential, and you will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity. Your participation in this interview is voluntary, you can choose to or not to participate. Also note that there is no compensation for participating in this study. However, your participation can be a valuable knowledge addition to the research on parental involvement for Spanish-speaking ELLs parents.

Please, kindly reply to this email if you are willing to participate and we will both agree on a time we can meet to go through other things you need to know about the research (Inform Consent), and you will provide your signature in agreement. Then, you will suggest your availability for the interview.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank You!

Olawumi Salako

University of North Dakota

Appendix E

Consent to Participate in Research

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Project Title: Parental Involvement for Spanish-speaking English Learners: Teachers' perspectives

Principal Investigator: Grace Keengwe

Phone/Email Address: 701-777-3378, grace.Keengwe@ndus.

Co-Investigator(s): Olawumi O Salako

Phone/Email Address: olawumi.salako@und.edu

Department: Teaching, Leadership, & Professional Practice

Research Advisor: Grace Keengwe

Phone/Email Address: 701-777-3378, grace.Keengwe@ndus..

What should I know about this research?

• Researcher will explain this research to you.

• Taking part in this research is voluntary. Whether you take part is up to you.

• If you don't take part, it won't be held against you.

• You can take part now and later drop out, and it won't be held against you.

• If you don't understand, ask questions.

• Ask all the questions you want before you decide.

How long will I be in this research?

We expect that your taking part in this research will involve one interview with a time commitment of no than 2 hours.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this study is to investigate elementary school teachers' perceptions about parental involvement of parents of Spanish-speaking English Language learners; challenges they are experiencing in their attempt to promote parental involvement of parents of Spanish-speaking English learners and the strategies teachers are implementing to promote parental involvement of parents of English learners.

Approval Date: 3/28/2023

Expiration Date: 3/27/2024

University of North Dakota IRB

Date: _____

Subject Initial: _____

What happens to me if I agree to take part in this research?

You are being asked to participate in an interview, which will be audio-recorded with your permission. The interview will consist of demographic questions and discussion questions asking for your perspectives, challenges, and strategies you use to engage parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs in their children's education.

Could being in this research hurt me?

There is no foreseeable risk to participating in this research

Will being in this research benefit me?

It is not expected that you will personally benefit from this research. However, maybe sharing your perspectives, challenges, and strategies working with Spanish-speaking ELLs parents can be a form of reflection that will improve your practice of parent involvement.

How many people will participate in this research?

Six teachers will be interviewed for this study.

Will it cost me money to take part in this research?

You will not incur any expenses for participating in this study.

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?

You will not receive any monetary compensation for participating in this research study.

Who is funding this research?

The University of North Dakota and the researchers are not receiving any payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

What happens to information collected for this research?

Your private information may be shared with individuals and organizations that conduct or watch over this research including anyone who audits the records.

• The research advisor, Dr. Grace Keengwe

• The Institutional Review Board (IRB) that will review this research.

Approval Date: 3/28/2023

Expiration Date: 3/27/2024

University of North Dakota IRB

Date: _____

Subject Initial: _____

We may publish the results of this research. However, we will keep your name and other identifying information confidential. We protect your information from disclosure to others to the extent required by law. We cannot promise complete secrecy. You will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity.

Once you have reviewed and verified the transcripts, the audio recordings will be destroyed. Only the transcripts with pseudonyms will be kept.

What if I agree to be in the research and then change my mind?

If you decide to leave the study early, we ask that you let the researcher know you no longer want to participate. The researcher will confirm she received this request and you will no longer be contacted. There will be no consequences for this decision.

Who can answer my questions about this research?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, talk to the researchers at the phone number listed above on the first page.

This research is being overseen by an Institutional Review Board ("IRB"). An IRB is a group of people who perform independent review of research studies. You may talk to them at 701.777.4279 or UND.irb@UND.edu if:

• You have questions, concerns, or complaints that are not being answered by the research team.

• You are not getting answers from the research team.

• You cannot reach the research team.

• You want to talk to someone else about the research.

• You have questions about your rights as a research subject.

• You may also visit the UND IRB website for more information about being a research subject: https://und.edu/research/resources/human-subjects/research-participants.html

Approval Date: 3/28/2023

Expiration Date: 3/27/2024

University of North Dakota IRB

Date: _____

Subject Initial: _____

Your signature documents your consent to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Subject's Name: _____

_____ _____
Signature of Subject Date

I have discussed the above points with the subject or, where appropriate, with the subject's legally authorized representative.

_____ _____
Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent Date

Approval Date: 3/28/2023
Expiration Date: 3/27/2024
University of North Dakota IRB

Date: _____

Subject Initial: _____