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**Collaboration with Families, Teachers,
and Other Professionals in School
Settings: A systematic review**

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Abstract

ABSTRACT: Having effective collaboration skills is one of the most necessary skills that both families and educators need to demonstrate in order to meet their students' needs. Today, effective collaboration between school and home is required more than ever in schools because collaboration helps assure that students receive well-coordinated supports to meet their needs, and it also demonstrates respect and equality among teachers, school personnel, and families. In addition, school-home collaboration is important because schools currently have students from different cultural, linguistic, social, and ethnic backgrounds, and it is also legally required by IDEIA. In the preparation of this paper, (17) studies published between (2004 and 2020) in the United States were reviewed to identify the most important components that need to be considered to foster collaboration with families, teachers, and other professionals in school settings. The review led to the identification of three components: (a) understanding the cultural and social backgrounds of the students' families, (b) providing supports for the students' families in school and at home, and (c) training teachers and other professionals in school settings to develop their collaboration skills. Implications for effective collaboration are identified and discussed. The study recommends that it is necessary to encourage positive collaboration between families and professionals. Schools should spend more interest of positively influencing the cultural and social system of families in order to meet their needs and the needs of their children.

Key Words: Collaboration, Families, Teachers, Other Professionals,
School Settings

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التعاون مع الأسر والمعلمين والمهنيين الآخرين في بيئات المدرسة: مراجعة منهجية

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ملخص

الملخص: يعد امتلاك مهارات التعاون الفعال أحد أكثر المهارات الضرورية التي تحتاج كل من الأسر والمعلمين لإثباتها من أجل تلبية احتياجات طلابهم. اليوم، التعاون الفعال بين المدرسة والمنزل مطلوب أكثر من أي وقت مضى في المدارس؛ لأن التعاون يساعد في ضمان حصول الطلاب على دعم جيد لتلبية احتياجاتهم، كما أنه يظهر الاحترام والمساواة بين المعلمين وموظفي المدرسة والأسر. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يعد التعاون بين المدرسة والمنزل أمرًا مهمًا لأن المدارس تضم حاليًا طلابًا من خلفيات ثقافية ولغوية واجتماعية وعرقية مختلفة، كما أنها مطلوبة قانونًا من قبل قانون تعليم الأفراد ذوي الإعاقة. في هذه الورقة تمت مراجعة (١٧) دراسة نُشرت بين الأعوام (٢٠١٤-٢٠٢٠) في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية لتحديد أهم المكونات التي يجب مراعاتها لتعزيز التعاون مع الأسر والمعلمين وغيرهم من المتخصصين في البيئات المدرسية. أدت المراجعة إلى تحديد ثلاثة مكونات:

أ) فهم الخلفيات الثقافية والاجتماعية لأسر الطلاب.

ب) تقديم الدعم لأسر الطلاب في المدرسة والمنزل.

ج) تدريب المعلمين والمهنيين الآخرين في بيئات المدرسة لتطوير مهارات التعاون لديهم. تم تحديد ومناقشة الآثار المترتبة على التعاون الفعال. توصي الدراسة بضرورة تشجيع التعاون الإيجابي بين الأسر والمهنيين، وأن تبذل المدارس المزيد من الجهد من حيث التأثير الإيجابي على النظام الثقافي والاجتماعي للأسر، من أجل تلبية احتياجاتهم واحتياجات أطفالهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تعاون، الأسر، المعلمون، المتخصصون الآخرون، بيئات المدرسة.

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Introduction:

According to Friend and Cook (2003), collaboration is “a style for direct interaction between at least two coequal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work towards a common goal” (p. 5). In the last three decades, collaboration in school involving teachers, other school members, and students' families, has appeared as a vital component in terms of providing appropriate educational services and supports to students with and without disabilities (Friend & Cook, 2007). According to Olivos (2010), the advantages of collaboration are seen as being mutually beneficial for students, educators, and families. Research indicates that students' learning is influenced by collaboration and the actions emanating from both homes and schools (Brabour & Brabour, 1997; Friend & Cook, 2007). Therefore, Brabour and Brabour (1997) stated that the educational progress of those students whose parents are involved in their education and often take part in school meetings is more likely to be greater than that of students whose parents are not involved in this way. Furthermore, they pointed out that the collaboration between schools and homes ensures the provision of all types of support that students need to grow into functioning adults.

When it comes to the teachers and other staff in schools, Murray and Mereoiu (2016) indicated that schools might be less effective in educating students if they ignore or misunderstand the importance of collaboration with other professionals and students' families. Olivos (2010) pointed out that collaboration with special education teachers, general education teachers, and other professionals in schools demonstrates equality among them which leads to providing access to numerous opinions, support, facilities, and resources that develop the education services for students

with disabilities. It can be seen that teachers would be far more effective in teaching their students with disabilities if they could unite their efforts with those of other school staff. Additionally, the benefits of collaboration for parents can be seen in increasing their role in the decision-making process and for having responsibility for their children's education (Olivos, 2010). Murray and Mereoiu (2016) argued that when a student's parents are collaborating in his or her education, they send an important message to their child's school. Murray and Mereoiu claimed that "these parents send the message that they play key roles in establishing partnerships and that legislative policies support their engagement" (p. 277). In addition, parents will indicate that their knowledge and involvement in education are significant for educators to make success in their work with students.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the benefits of collaboration are not limited to the students' academic progress. Brabour and Brabour (1997) pointed out that one of the most important benefits of school-family collaboration is fostering an understanding of human and social capital in order to provide the nurturing and physical environment that each student needs to cope with the society they live in. Also, the Individuals with Disabilities Education and Improvement Act (IDEIA-2004) indicates that teachers must collaborate and be more effective with other teachers and professionals to develop instructions based on their grade-level standards (Zagona et al., 2019). Additionally, schools currently have students from different ethnic, cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds, so collaboration with the students' families would be a great opportunity for schools to have a clear knowledge and information about the diverse needs of their students in order to identify the best ways of dealing and teaching them (Trainor, 2010).

In general, it should be noted that teachers need to collaborate with their students' families, as well as with other teachers and professionals in school settings such as school counselors, social workers, and administrators to ensure the success of their students and to support their learning in school and in the home. When they work with each other as a team, students with and without disabilities will make progress and be able to meet their academic and social goals. However, due to the fact that not all ways of collaboration are the same, for a range of different reasons such as the school system, teachers' capacity, parents' education, and culturally and linguistically diverse parental involvement, there is a need to make more efforts to improve school-home collaboration (Clifford & Göncü, 2019; Murray & Mereoiu, 2016; Olivos, 2009; Stroetinga et al., 2019).

Therefore, the purpose of this research review is to identify possible ways to foster collaboration on the part of students' families, teachers, and other school members. The research question related to this systematic review of research is how to foster collaboration on the part of families, teachers, and other professionals in school settings.

Method:

Keywords that were used as search terms for this systematic review included school-home collaboration, teacher-parent collaboration, teacher and parent collaboration, and special education collaboration. These search terms were used to identify pertinent studies in the following electronic research databases: Educational Research Information Center (ERIC), Complementary Index, Educational Research Complete, and Arab World Source. A manual search was also used to identify the relevant studies cited in reference lists.

A total of (524) studies were found; of these, (17) studies met all the criteria (see Figure 1). The following criteria were used to select the studies for consideration in the review:

Inclusion Criteria

- Studies researching collaboration between schools and students' families in the United States.
- Original peer-reviewed studies published between (2004) (when IDEIA was reauthorized) and (2020).
- Studies involving empirical research
- Studies involving participants in the form of pre-service and in-service special education, and in-service general education teachers, school principals, and school administrators.
- Studies exploring specific systems and ways for improving collaboration between families, teachers, and other professionals in schools.

Exclusion Criteria

- Studies published prior to (2004).
- Studies that compared the collaboration in the in the United States with that in other countries (comparative studies).
- Studies that were not peer-reviewed.
- Articles that were collaboration model descriptions or reviews of research.
- Studies that were conducted with pre-service special education teachers outside the United States.

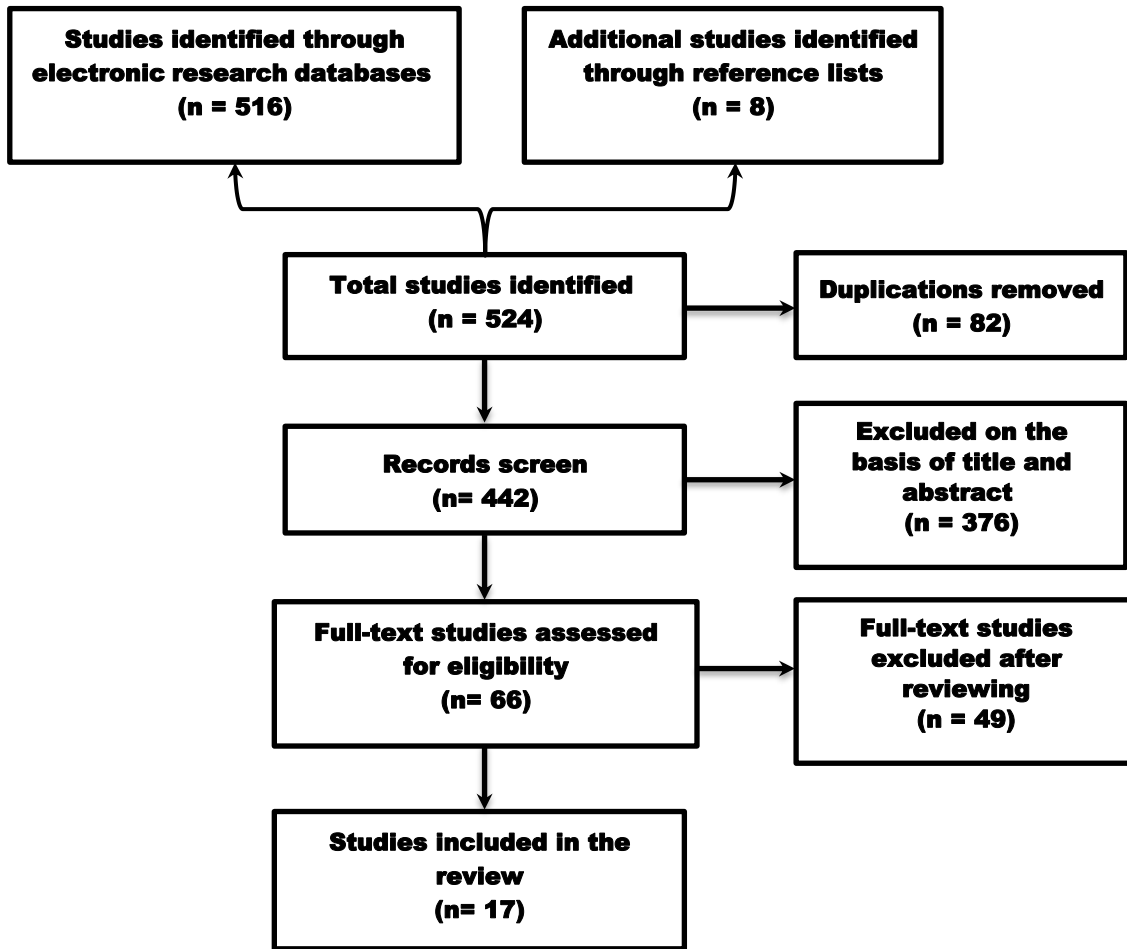


Figure 1
Flowchart of the selection process

Results:

After the systematic review procedure, (17) studies that met the inclusion criteria were included in the review. The study’s focus, design, data collection, samples, settings, and findings are represented in Table 1. The research review is organized into three major categories based on whether the participants included pre-service and in-service teachers (n = 5), parents and guardians (n = 8), or both parents and teachers (n = 4). The results of the review of the studies are summarized based on these participant characteristics as follows:

Pre-service and In-service Teachers:

There were five studies that included in-service and pre-service teachers as participants. six studies deal with pre-service special education and general education teachers, and three studies deal with in-service special education and general education teachers. In a case study by Van Hover et al. (2012), the authors aimed to explore how a special education teacher and a general teacher collaborate in a history course in a high-stakes assessment context at Rutherford High School in Virginia. The study was framed by a policy sociology framework and the notion of educators within institutional locations. Van Hover et al. used classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with two teachers, course materials, and reflective research journals to collect their data. The findings confirmed that both teachers were ambitious collaborators. They showed an excellent model of how a special educator and a general educator emerged as positive and creative collaborators, particularly in terms of organizing their educational performance within the classroom setting.

Nevertheless, when it comes to how these two teachers made sense of teaching, it seemed as though the special education teacher had a slightly more ambitious view of her capability to connect history to pupils, and how to teach beyond the test (Van Hover et al., 2012). On the other hand, the general education teacher seemed to be more aware of the high-stakes testing context. The general education teacher was also concerned about managing the behaviors of his students, and his main focus was on the students' test scores, which impacted his preparation and thinking about history instruction. However, one of the limitations of this study is that the researchers chose a small sample in the form of only one special education

teacher and one general education teacher. In addition, the researchers focused only on teaching history. Therefore, it would be interesting in future research to include more special education teachers and general education teachers who teach different subjects to understand how they see their collaboration with each other in an inclusive setting.

In another study, Bradley and Monda-Amaya (2005) used multiple baselines to examine the influence of a training program aimed to help pre-service special education teachers recognize, analyze, and work to resolve teacher-teacher conflicts. Additionally, Bradley and Monda-Amaya examined attitudes and personal styles in terms of conflict, and the generalization of lately obtained skills to other conflict conditions. The study participants were nine pre-service teachers (7 females and 2 males) in a special education teacher preparation program at a large mid-western university. According to Bradley and Monda-Amaya (2005), the participants were divided into three groups and "a variety of tools were used to measure (a) opinions about conflict, (b) approaches to conflict, (c) analysis of responses to conflict vignettes, (d) generalization of skills, and (e) social validation of content, procedures, and application" (p. 174). The findings confirmed that pre-service teachers' capacity to analyze conflict conditions and to use suitable steps to resolution improved over time, and positive influence was noted in their thoughts about and ways to conflict. The pre-service teachers in this study also stated that they have a more comfortable feeling with regard to conflict after they were introduced to an approach that helps them think through conflict situations. The authors also suggested the need for more research on other adult conflict resolution situations in school settings, such as teaching assistants, parents, and administrators.

In the work of Trainor (2010), the researcher assumed that the role of social and cultural capital in special education collaboration is still unknown. Therefore, Trainor aimed to explore what (17) teachers from a large midwestern school district expected in terms of parents' understanding and the use of cultural and social capital. The data were collected through three focus group interviews, which were recorded verbatim and uploaded into a qualitative analysis software program. The findings showed that the teachers were aware of their responsibility when it came to making opportunities for their students' families to collaborate in their children's education and decision-making. The results also showed that teachers are aware that disability acknowledgment and an acceptance of having a child with a disability are fundamental factors for parental collaboration. Moreover, the researcher found that increasing teachers' understanding of the role of cultural and social capital could increase their positive outlook with regard to parents and their ability to engage with them in terms of special education collaboration. Based on the findings of this study, it can be seen that teachers must be willing to think critically about the influence and the role that cultural and social factors have with regard to teacher-parent collaboration.

In another study, Dotger et al. (2011) examined the transfer of a medical education training to teacher education, inspecting the kinds of emotional responses of six teachers (5 females and 1 male) through six separate settings of parent conferences at SUNY Upstate Medical University. Dotger et al. stated that after each teacher-parent conference, the six pre-service teachers engaged with the researcher in semi-structured interviews and large group discussions. The findings showed the

significance of this subject in teacher education, especially in terms of exposing educators to family settings, qualified communications, and the emotional terrain of teacher-parent partnerships. When it comes to co-instruction, Grillo et al. (2011) also assessed the perceptions of "general and special educators on co-planning, co-teaching and co-assessing in an attempt to provide all students increased learning outcomes in a high school setting" (p. 31). Interviews were used to collocate data from highly capable educators in either general education or special education in Novice High School in Orange County, Florida. They identified three themes in the form of commitment to co-instruction as a unique way for student success, including the need to develop workshops to improve teacher performances in terms of co-planning, co-teaching and co-assessing, and a dedication to applying research-based practices in the co-instruction design to improve student's developments. They also found that these three elements are the means to ensuring successful co-teaching and are also the origin of challenges that educators face with regard to collaboration.

In the previous five studies, there are two of them which deal with pre-service special education and general education teachers' perceptions with regard to collaboration and the need for teacher preparation programs to prepare students to effectively co-plan, co-teach, and collaborate with students' families and other staff in school settings (Bradley & Monda-Amaya, 2005; Dotger et al., 2011). In addition, three studies deal with the perceptions and understandings of in-service special education and general education teachers towards involvement and collaboration with families, and how this might influence student development, as well as the effect of the cultural and social factors associated with special education collaboration (Grillo et al., 2011; Trainor, 2010; Van Hover et al., 2012).

In general, the previous studies indicated the need for both pre-service and in-service teachers to be well-prepared and willing to work as a part of a collaborative team, which includes students' families, other teachers, professionals, and related service providers in schools. These studies also emphasized the need for a deeper understanding of the home language, culture, and social status as important factors in school-home collaboration. They also indicated that these can be met by having a good relationship and good communication with each family.

Students' Parents and Guardians

There were eight studies that included parents and guardians as participants. Four of these studies focus on the belief of parents that have diverse needs in terms of school-home collaboration, and the particular challenges involved in building home-school partnerships. The other four studies deal with parents' knowledge, trust, responsibility in school-home collaboration, and how these aspects could impact their views with regard to home-school collaboration and relationships.

In a study by Leath et al. (2020), the parental involvement expectations of (76) black female parents or guardians who have children in the first grade in two school districts in a Midwestern state were investigated. The researchers used interviews to determine how mothers from their population take care of their children as students across educational, social, and emotional areas, and the level to which these parents' expectations for their participation diverse in terms of their children's gender. The researchers found that the participants of male students were more worried about race and gender than were participants of female students, particularly in relative to educational services, settings,

and the misdiagnosis of disabilities. In addition, they found that the majority of the participants were not concerned about their female students' transition to the next education level. However, it should be noted that the influences of social class and working status on parental involvement expectations were not considered in this study. Finally, Leath et al. suggested the need for more research to identify how black mothers' responses could change with the increasing age of children.

In a mixed-methods study, Crea et al. (2015) explored the current state of parents' engagement at Cristo Rey Boston High School, which is a Catholic high school in Boston, with the aim of finding strengths and ways that might help improve their educational programs in the future. The researchers used a parent-teacher involvement survey and focus groups with (119) parents of students enrolled in Cristo Rey Boston High School. Their findings indicated that parents with diverse needs considered their collaboration to be a significant part of their children's learning compared with other parents. However, the results indicated that immigrant parents were less engaged in activities to support their children's learning than other parents. Therefore, based on the results of this research, school administrators at Cristo Rey Boston High School began working on how to involve this group of parents in their children's education. In addition, Crea et al. argued that from the perception of Catholic social schooling, understanding and dealing with these needs are a way of praxis that supports human rights and limit the difficulties and challenges of teaching students with diverse needs.

In another study, Zagona et al. (2019) have drawn attention to the issue of implementing the students' IEP goals by schools after meeting

with their parents. Their purpose was to “(a) understand parents’ perspectives on special education services, including the degree to which special education decisions about goals, services, and placement were implemented as agreed upon; and to (b) understand how parents explain why schools do or do not implement elements of the IEP” (Zagona et al., 2019, p. 109). The participants in this study were (18) parents and guardians of children with intellectual and developmental disability. Interview and focus group methods were designed and used to gather the participants’ perceptions with regard to the special education services provided for children with intellectual and developmental disability.

The findings showed that these parents experienced difficulties in reaching an agreement with teachers and other professionals in school settings on decisions relating to their children’s settings and special education services. Also, parents showed a desire to play a role in decision-making with regard to their children's education. Parents also shared both positive and negative experiences with regard to the implementation of special education services for their children. For instance, some parents stated that their children's school implemented useful accommodations and modifications that helped their children progress in their education and meet their IEP goals. On the other hand, some parents stated that teachers did not implement agreed-upon accommodations and supports for their children. Some of these parents also described negative experiences such as misdiagnosis of their children’s disabilities and implementing inappropriate accommodations and behavioral supports for them. Furthermore, the parents argued that the lack of parents’ and educators’ knowledge and training, schools’ financial resources, and a lack of understanding of the parents’ and

children's' rights under IDEA as reasons why special education services and goals were not applied as they had been agreed upon.

When it comes to the parents' perspectives on school efforts to educate their children, Santiago et al. (2016) claimed that there is a lack of research exploring the parents' trust in their children's education. Therefore, they aimed to explore the effect of demographic variables on parental trust and the relationship between parental trust, learner behavior, and parental participation in school. A survey was used with (212) parents who have children enrolled in kindergarten through 4th grade in four schools in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. Santiago et al. (2016), found three significant implications in this study. First, the results indicated that parents of learners who receive free school meals were less trusting of their children's teachers. Second, parental trust was significantly related to some dimensions of the students' behavior. Third, parents who have a higher trust of teachers also show more frequent participation with teachers and professionals in school settings. The researchers suggested the need for future studies involving large sample and including parents with diverse needs.

In the work of Tucker and Schwartz (2013), an online survey was used to explore the perceptions of (135) parents with regard to collaboration and conflict between parents of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and school professionals, as well as describing their experiences during IEP collaboration in two local school districts in Washington State. The parents of students with ASD stated that they are willing to be involved in their children's IEPs, but they pointed out that it is challenging to be involved in their education due to some difficulties constructed by the schools and school districts, such as difficulties in terms

of communication, disagreements about the school placing their children in inclusive classrooms, and their formulation of their children's IEP goals and the provision of other special education services. The participants also provided some possible ideas with regard to improving and increasing parental involvement, including increasing parent-teacher communication and ensuring that parents have access to their children's information in school to be better prepared for IEP meetings. In addition, they suggested that special education teachers and other staff in school need to have a deeper understanding of the importance of the parents' role as IEP members in their children's education.

Clifford and Göncü (2019), also studied the issue of parental involvement in their children's education from a socio-cultural aspect. They explored parental involvement in young learners' education in a low-income African American community. The participants in their study were (14) African American parents who have children in early childhood. All the participants live in a low-income neighborhood in a big city. A semi-structured interview was used to explore the parents' perceptions with regard to their involvement in their children's schooling. The researchers found that all (14) parents were involved in their children's education in some way. The findings showed that parents who were highly engaged in their children's learning at home collaborated with the teachers generally through group activities within the school community. However, somewhat lower numbers of these parents were engaged in supervising activities, responding to the teachers' requests to meet, and supporting their children's learning in the classroom setting. In addition, the parents noted that they need to take more steps with regard to working with the school and being

involved in their children's learning. Clifford and Göncü also suggested the need for more research to investigate parental involvement from the caregiver and community points of view to develop a deeper understanding of the connection between parental participation and their goals and beliefs in terms of their children's learning.

In another study, Whitaker and Hoover-Dempsey (2013) investigated how parents' views about the part they play in their children's education are shaped by previous experiences, especially their experience of involvement in their children's schooling. In this research, a survey was carried out involving (197) parents of students in two schools in a major south-eastern city in the United States. In general, they found that parents' perceptions of their involvement, school expectations of participation, and school environment had the main impact on the family's view of their role in one of the two schools, while the school community or environment was the only predictor of parents' view of the role of the family in the second school. Whitaker and Hoover-Dempsey also found that educators' invitations to become involved did not influence the two schools' role beliefs.

In a study by Ee (2017), the researcher examined the degree to which parents' participation in school is influenced by their demographic characteristics and other related variables by examining a survey involving (454) parents of pupils enrolled in six schools in two school districts in the Los Angeles area. The researcher stated that most of parents and students in the study were from different language and cultural backgrounds. The outcomes showed two major factors of parental association in school activities-personal connections between the parents about their children's learning, and parents' participation in school. The author found that the

families of White and Asian students were more likely to cooperate with other families than the families of students from other backgrounds. Also, Ee found that the parents of pupils from low-income communities did not communicate with other parents. In addition, the findings also showed that the school setting also influenced parents' participation. For instance, the more positive the perspective about the school environment and climate, the more these parents were involved in their children's education. Based on these findings, the author indicated the need for some immigrant parents from diverse social, cultural, and language backgrounds to receive support and cultural guidelines from schools to increase their parental involvement in school activities, as well as their interaction with other students' families.

In the previous eight studies, there are two studies aimed to understand the perceptions of African American mothers with regard to their involvement and their collaboration with schools in terms of their children's education (Clifford & Göncü, 2019; Leath et al., 2020). Clifford and Göncü (2019) found that there was less involvement and response to classroom support and schools' requests, while Leath et al. (2020) found that the mothers who are from the African American population were very concerned about some issues related to their children's education, such as the classroom settings and a misdiagnosis of their disabilities. Also, other studies included families with a range of diversity and immigrant families aiming to determine their beliefs regarding collaboration and parental involvement in schools (Ee, 2017; Crea et al., 2015). They found that immigrant parents tend to participate less in terms of collaboration and working with the school regarding their children's education. These researchers suggested the need to provide more support for parents with diverse needs to make them more aware of their potential role in their children's learning development.

Similarly, the other four studies explored the perceptions and understandings of the parents of students with and without disabilities in terms of their involvement in decision-making and IEP processes, as well as their trust in their children's education based on their prior experiences (Santiago et al., 2016; Tucker & Schwartz, 2013; Whitaker & Hoover-Dempsey, 2013; Zagona et al., 2019). They found that these families felt they were not involved in decision-making about their children's learning. Also, parents' views and roles with regard to student learning and teacher-parent collaboration are influenced by school climate and involvement, as well as by the families' cultural and social backgrounds. However, the studies emphasized the need for families and educators to understand their responsibilities and educational rights under IDEA.

Parents and Teachers:

There were four studies that included both parents and teachers as participants. Three of these studies focus on teacher-parent relationships and the current status of school-home collaboration, particularly with the parents of children in kindergartens and daycare centers (Cummings et al., 2015; Lang et al., 2017; Nzinga-Johnson et al., 2009). The fourth study was about the effectiveness of a particular training program in terms of changing the attitudes of both teachers and parents with regard to their collaboration during IEP meetings and processes (Mereoiu et al., 2016).

Lang et al. (2017) studied the parent-teacher relationships of (90) parents and (40) teachers of children who were placed in (10) full-time childcare centers. The participants were asked to complete a Co-Caring Relationship Questionnaire (CRQ) in order to develop an understanding of

the parents' and teachers' perceptions of their co-caring relationships. According to Lang et al. (2017), four components appeared from this Questionnaire (i.e., support, undermining, endorsement, and agreement). The findings showed that "support and undermining had the strongest associations when it came to examine the relations between co-caring and different aspects of parent-reported parental involvement after controlling for child-and parent-level covariates" (Lang et al., 2017, p. 109). When it comes to the endorsement, it shows families' confidence in their children's teachers as a qualified caregiver.

Finally, the better parental perspective of agreement in the co-caring association was also correlated with lower educator-reported classroom collaboration, and that because when the families have a great agreement in the co-caring relationship, they feel that there is no need to come to the center and be involved in the work of the center. The findings highlighted the need to focus on building and providing supportive co-caring relationships as an important way to increase all forms of parent-teacher collaboration.

When it comes to early education, Cummings et al. (2015) also explored the perceptions of (13) parents and childcare teachers about their collaboration in an in-service training guided by the Partnerships in Early Education Relationships with Support (PEERS) model, which has the aim of considering how best to foster inclusive education in early childhood at childcare centers in North Carolina. The researchers stated that a semi-structured interview protocol was designed and used with the participants in this study (9 parents and 4 childcare teachers) who attended the PEERS training workshops. They found that most of the participants were of the

opinion that these workshops were useful in implementing inclusion for all children, with and without disabilities, as well as making them aware of new resources and learning about new teaching practices for different children and situations. Both parents and teachers had various perspectives with regard to the training program, including the training content, delivery, and collaborative features. Also, no one revealed any negative perceptions with regard to their experience, and some of them even asked to be included in any subsequent training programs. Additionally, the parents and teachers argued that attending the PEERS workshop provided them with a deeper understanding of collaborative procedures between home and school.

In a related study, Mereoiu et al. (2016) explained changes in attitudes about the IEP developed by special education teachers and parents participating in a state-wide six-month collaboration training program. The participants were (21) special education teachers and (18) parents of students with disabilities. The participants were invited to complete questionnaires before and after attending the collaborative training. They found that parents' overall attitudes towards the value of IEP decreased, while that of the teachers increased. In addition, both before and after receiving the professional development, the special education teachers rated the value of group planning and working during the IEP procedure higher than did the parents. The findings showed the need for individual training and direction for students' parents to help them understand the importance of the IEP in terms of their children's development and their role as an IEP member.

In a study by Nzinga-Johnson et al. (2009), the researchers assessed relationships among the quality of teachers and family-perceived relationships and educator-reported parental participation between parents of children in

kindergarten, and whether cultural, ethnic, or socio-economic considerations moderated these relations. The participants included (483) parents and (431) teachers of students at the kindergarten level. The data were obtained using a scale developed by the National Center for Early Development and Learning Multi-State Study of Pre-Kindergarten. Both parents and teachers were from a range of different educational and racial backgrounds (i.e., African American, Latino, Asian American, White). They found that both parents and teachers perceived association quality as a strong predictor of teacher-reported parental participation, regardless of racial and socio-economic components. Nevertheless, parents from African American and Latino backgrounds, as well as less-educated parents, participated less in their children's education in school than White or more highly educated parents.

It can be noted that including both teachers and students' parents as participants in these four studies can be seen as a strength compared with the earlier studies that included only either students' parents or teachers because the researchers aimed to study school-home collaboration from various different perspectives. In addition, the overall findings of these studies made use of the findings of earlier studies about the major role that the relationship between teachers and students' families could play in the efficacy of their collaboration in the students' education. Also, these studies showed the need to make more efforts in the school involvement of parents with diverse needs.

In sum, the (17) studies showed the importance of preparing pre-service teachers in terms of being willing to collaborate with other educators and with learners' families because having well-prepared pre-service teachers would ensure that these new teachers understand the rights

and the significant roles that other professionals and families in the students' learning. In addition, focusing on school-home collaboration in teacher preparation will help these teachers demonstrate respect and equality among other teachers, school staff, and students' families.

These studies suggested the need for coursework as part of teacher education programs, and field experience that focuses on training pre-service teachers to improve their co-teaching skills, as well as helping them understand that they need to be involved in working in groups that include general education teachers, school's administrators, related service providers, and students' parents to provide a high-quality education for their students (Mereoiu et al., 2016). The reviewed studies also indicated that teachers should have a clear understanding of the importance of their relationship with other staff in school because each student with a disability receives instruction from both general education teachers and special education teachers, interact with a specific curriculum, and receive all the special education services and support that each one of them needs, as is noted in their IEPs.

Also, when it comes to in-service special education and general education teachers, it should be noted that the reviewed studies highlight the need to introduce professional development for in-service teachers to help them know the major role that families could play in educating their children. In addition, such professional development programs would help improve their co-planning, co-teaching, and co-assessing skills (Grillo et al., 2011; Van Hover et al., 2012). Moreover, Trainor (2010) argued that to have successful and effective teacher-parent collaboration, especially with the parents of students from different cultural, social, and language

backgrounds, both special education teachers and general education teachers should understand and learn about their students' homes cultures. Teachers should understand that cultural and social differences, as well as differences in learning styles, can affect the students' learnings and behaviors in the school setting. When it comes to students' families, the reviewed research showed the need for students' parents to be aware of their responsibilities and rights in terms of their children's education under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). Students' parents also must play their part as IEP members to meet their children's needs, given that these cannot be met without collaboration and working with their children's teachers and other professionals in school settings.

Table 1
Summary of the Reviewed Studies

Author/ year	Focus	Design, data collection	Sample/ setting	Findings
Van Hover et al. (2012)	Exploring how a special education teacher and a general education teacher collaborate in a history course in a high-stakes testing context.	Qualitative Observation, interviews, course materials, and reflective research journals.	One special education teacher and one general education teacher. Rutherford High School in Virginia.	Teachers offered a perfect model of how a special education teacher and a general education teacher merge in establishing a positive and creative collaboration. Special education teacher elucidated more ambitious perceptions toward the capability to connect history to pupils, and how to teach beyond the test compared with the general education teacher.

Author/ year	Focus	Design, data collection	Sample/ setting	Findings
Bradley and Monda-Amaya (2005)	Examining the influence of an instructional package aiming to assist student teachers to recognize, analyze, and work to resolve actual teacher-teacher conflicts.	Quantitative Case study	Nine pre-service teachers. A large mid-western university.	Results confirmed that participants' capacity to analyze conflict conditions and to use suitable steps for resolution improved over time, and positive perceptions were noted.
Trainor (2010)	Exploring 17 teachers' expectations of parental acquisition and application of cultural and social capital.	Qualitative Focus group interviews	17 teachers A large mid-western school district.	Participants considered disability acknowledgment and acceptance of a child with a disability to be important capital for parents' involvement. Improving teachers' understanding of the role of cultural and social capital can enhance their positive thoughts towards home-school collaboration.
Dotger et al. (2011)	Studying the transfer of a medical education pedagogy to teacher education and inspecting the kinds of emotional responses teachers showed as they participated in several parent-teacher conferences.	Qualitative Focus group interviews	Six pre-service teachers. SUNY Upstate Medical University.	It was useful in terms of exposing teachers to parental contexts and collaboration.

Summary of the Reviewed Studies (continued)

Author/ year	Focus	Design, data collection	Sample/ setting	Findings
Grillo et al. (2011)	Investigation of the perceptions of teachers with regard to co-planning, co-teaching and co-assessing in an effort to deliver increased education consequences for all learners in a high school setting.	Qualitative Interviews	Special education and general education teachers. Novice High School in Orange County, Florida.	Commitment to co-instruction, workshop, and a dedication to applying research-based practices are important factors with regard to improving teacher performances in terms of co-planning, co-teaching, and co-assessing.
Leatha et al. (2019)	Exploring the parental involvement expectations of Black mothers who have children in 1st grade.	Qualitative Interviews	76 Black mothers Two school districts in a mid-western area.	Black mothers of male students were more concerned about race and gender than mothers of female students, especially about the issue of special education classroom settings and living with a misdiagnosed disability.
Crea et al. (2015)	Understanding the status of parental engagement in a Catholic high school	Mixed methods Survey and focus groups.	119 parents Cristo Rey Boston High School	The participants indicated that parents with diverse needs consider their engagement to be an important part of their children's education compared with other parents. Immigrant parents are less involved in terms of collaborating and working with the school to support their children's education.
Zagona et al. (2019)	Exploring parents' perceptions and experiences of special education, taking into account the extent to which decisions about their children's learning were implemented as they had agreed upon with teachers and other staff in the school.	Qualitative Interviews and focus groups.	18 parents and guardians.	Parents described both positive and negative experiences relating to the implementation of special education services and the setting of goals for their children as had been agreed upon with the school. Lack of parents' and teachers' training, knowledge about the educational rights under IDEA, and the schools' financial resources, can be reasons that the school was not delivering special education services as had been agreed in IEP meetings.

Summary of the Reviewed Studies (continued)

Author/ year	Focus	Design, data collection	Sample/ setting	Findings
Santiago et al. (2016)	Understanding the parents' trust in their children's education.	Quantitative Survey	212 parents Four elementary schools in the Pacific north-west.	Demographic variables estimate parents' trust which is linked with some dimensions of parents' views of student behaviors.
Tucker and Schwartz (2013)	Understanding the pre-service needs of teachers of students with ASD in terms of their perceptions with regard to collaboration and conflict with other school professionals.	Quantitative Survey	135 parents with ASD Two local school districts in Washington State.	There are some challenges in parental involvement due to certain difficulties in communication and parental disagreement with the school about placing their children's education. The parents showed that more effort needs to be made to involve them in IEP meetings and to give them the opportunity to share information and play their role in their children's IEP meetings.
Clifford and Göncü (2019)	Understanding the perceptions of African American parents from a low-income community about their involvement in their children's learning.	Qualitative Interviews	14 parents A major city in the U.S.	The findings indicated that parents who were highly involved in their children's education at home cooperated with teachers through activities in the school community, but that there is less involvement and response to classroom support and the school's requests.
Whitaker and Hoover-Dempsey (2013)	Examining how parents' views about their roles in their children's education are shaped by their earlier experiences.	Quantitative Survey	197 parents of students A south-eastern city in the United States. Two schools.	Parents' perceptions of invitations to student involvement, school expectations with regard to participation, and the school environment had the greatest influence on their view with regard to their role in one school, whereas school climate was the only forecaster of their views toward their role in the other.

Summary of the Reviewed Studies (continued)

Author/ year	Focus	Design, data collection	Sample/ setting	Findings
Ee (2017)	Exploring the degree to which parents' involvement in schools' activities is influenced by the parents' demographic features and other variables.	Quantitative Survey	454 parents Elementary schools in Los Angeles.	The findings showed two dimensions to parental involvement in school activities - personal interaction between the parents and the parents' perspectives about the school's environment. Also, more support is needed for parents with diverse needs.
Lang et al. (2017)	Examining the parents' and teachers' perceptions of their co-caring relationships.	Quantitative Survey	90 parents and 40 teachers. Ten childcare centers.	Support, undermining, endorsement, and agreement are important components in the co-caring relationships between parents and teachers.
Cummi ngs et al. (2015)	Exploring the perceptions of parents and childcare teachers about their collaboration in an in-service training program.	Qualitative Interview	Nine parents and four childcare teachers North Carolina	The training program has numerous components that participants felt are helpful for them when it comes to implementing inclusive practices for children with disabilities.
Mereoi u et al. (2016)	Examining how teachers' and parents' attitudes towards IEP change, before and after a workshop in a collaborative training model.	Quantitative Survey	21 special education teachers and 18 parents of students with disabilities	The attitudes toward the IEP, with parents' ratings of the value of the IEP workshop, decreased by the end of the program, while the educators' ratings increased. There is a need to develop more training for parents to understand the value of IEPs for their children's education.
Nzinga - Johnso n et al. (2009)	Examining the links between the quality of educators- and parents-perceived relationships, and educator-reported parental participation on the part of students' parents, and the influence of cultural or socio-economic factors in this relationship.	Quantitative Survey	483 parents and 431 teachers. Multi-state Study	Both parent- and educator-perceived relationship quality moderately to highly predicted educator-reported parental participation regardless of cultural and socio-economic influences.

Synthesis and Discussion

The review of (17) studies has shown that there are three major components in fostering collaboration with families, teachers, and other professionals in school settings. These components are understanding the families' culture by school staff to create a welcoming school environment, providing support for the families in terms of understanding their role in their children's education, and training both in-service and pre-service teachers to be well-qualified in terms of school-home collaboration. Based on this research review, it is clear that without supporting the students' families to deal with their children's education and understanding their backgrounds, schools will not be able to determine the best way to collaborate with these families because different racial and cultural groups have different patterns and ways of communication. In addition, it can be seen that having well-trained educators and professionals, as well as an appropriate school climate, plays a major role in providing successful collaboration with families which in turn leads to meeting the needs of the students at school and at home.

Understanding the Families' Cultural and Social Backgrounds to Create a Welcoming School Environment:

Students become aware of cultural and ethnic differences, especially when they begin going to school and interact with other students from different cultural backgrounds (Smith, 1998). They will recognize differences in the cultural backgrounds of others and the ways in which groups perform tasks and establish values when they interact with other groups. Also, it seems that the vast majority of students are being taught to

be aware of their own language, social, and cultural identity early in their lives. Therefore, schools and teachers, in particular, must have clear knowledge and information about the language, social, and cultural backgrounds of each student in their classroom to determine the best way in which to teach them. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to get all of such information about their students without having good relationships with their parents. Teachers and other professionals in schools should work and meet with the students' families to make them feel they are a part of the school community. Schools also should understand that if they want to involve the students' parents in collaborative associations with their children's teachers and related service providers, they need to develop a view of these parents that extends outside their culturally, socially, linguistically diverse status, and views them as parents who need additional language and social support (Crea et al., 2015).

In addition, schools should know that teachers and families may share many of the same objectives when it comes to individual children, but they may have different thoughts and ways of working when it comes to meeting these objectives. Therefore, by meeting with the students' parents, teachers will be able to identify the parents' concerns and goals, as well as their prior experiences with regard to their children's learning. It is also essential for schools to know that the life experiences of the children and their families, which could be in a different society, establish a background for these students' performance and their involvement in their school community. It should be noted that one of the most important benefits of understanding the cultural, social, and linguistic status of students and their families is that it helps the school consider and

incorporate racial diversity into its students' curriculums, instructions, and day-to-day school activities (Layon & Layon, 1991). For example, some teachers may have Mexican students who celebrate their national holidays, so these teachers need to include relevant examples of such holidays in their instructions. However, the teachers involved will frequently be unaware of these holidays without having a relationship and collaborating with the students' parents. This example indicates the need for schools to understand the background of the students' families in order to increase their stock of information about their students, as well as to decrease stereotyping and fear of those families which are different.

Providing Support for the Students' Families

It is important to know that providing support for the family cannot be effective without understanding their cultural, social, and linguistic status. Therefore, after schools get information about the students and their families, they can identify what assistance and support each family needs. For example, the reviewed research showed that schools need to work with immigrant parents and uneducated parents to help them become aware of their rights and responsibilities in such a way as to improve their children's education under IDEA (Zagona et al., 2019). Therefore, one of the possible ways that schools can help these parents learn about their rights is by developing training programs and workshops to increase their knowledge about their major role in their children's learning, and the importance of parental involvement in the school community. For example, schools can encourage professional development about the IDEA, and how this regulation outlines the rights of the parent of students with disabilities,

beginning with the early request for diagnosis and following all the way to being expected to be an active member in the IEP process, as well as discussions about other special education services.

Moreover, when it comes to working with parents, schools also should understand that families are complex structures, and they each have different needs. Consequently, what might be important and effective for a particular family might not be so in the case of other families. Therefore, school professionals should have a clear understanding of the specific needs of each family in order to identify what type of training and guidance might lead to meaningful collaboration to effectively support them and their children's education. There are other forms of support that schools and other related agencies in school districts can offer for parents and students based on their needs in and outside the school. For example, such support could include training programs in different areas related to the parental care of children at home, such as helping their children eat, handling, improving communication skills, managing behaviors, and using the toilet (Layon & Layon, 1991). It should be noted that when the students' parents see themselves considered to be part of a collaborative team with teachers and other professionals, not only in school but also at home, they will be more ambitious and motivated to be involved and to participate in the school setting regarding providing educational and other services to their children. Consequently, teachers and other professionals in school settings should understand that, in order to have meaningful collaboration and cooperation with families, they must make every effort to support these families, and extend their services into their students' homes.

Training Teachers and Other Professionals to Develop their Collaboration**Skills:**

The reviewed studies indicated that teacher training does not only mean preparing teachers to simply present facts and information to their students. Training teachers also means preparing them to demonstrate effective skills in collaboration, and often engage in co-teaching with other professionals in school and working with students' parents to identify the appropriate goals and educational services that each student should receive based on their strengths and needs. However, based on the reviewed studies, it is clear that teacher preparation programs need to make more effort to address the collaboration skills needed by pre-service teachers to effectively collaborate with each other and other professionals in schools, as well as with their students' families (Dotger et al., 2011). The review suggests that teacher preparation programs should make every effort to build a better understanding of parental involvement in order to improve the collaboration skills not just of special education teachers, but of general teachers as well.

Therefore, there are different approaches that teacher preparation programs can adopt to provide highly qualified teachers with the collaborative skills they need. These approaches can be introduced through the programs' coursework and as part of field experience. For instance, one of the possible ways to help teachers have a better understanding of the importance of collaboration is by designing a course that specifically focuses on collaboration which covers the broad array of collaborative strategies that are needed in schools. The reviewed studies showed the effectiveness of developing a course that focuses on the skills needed for collaboration between the teachers themselves (Bradley & Monda-Amaya, 2005). This

type of coursework and training programs made positive changes in the pre-service teachers' attitudes toward school collaboration. Another way of training pre-service teachers with regard to school-home collaboration can be by implementing a program called *Family as Faculty: parents in case-based instruction*. This program offers an opportunity for pre-service teachers to meet and interview students' families about their children's education. The review showed that delivering this type of program can be useful in improving the collaboration skills of their pre-service teachers.

Moreover, field experience also can be seen as a great opportunity to develop the collaborative and co-teaching skills of pre-service teachers under the supervision of university faculty. For example, the supervisors of the pre-service teachers can include meetings with the student's families and engaging the IEP meetings as part of the requirements of coursework experience. This could increase the pre-service teachers' knowledge and skills with regard to co-planning and co-instructing. Additionally, for teachers and professionals who are already graduated and work in schools, they can receive professional development and workshops developed by their school districts or related agencies, to train and coach them in terms of how to collaborate closely with each other and with students' families (Clifford & Göncü, 2019). Schools should understand that not all of their teachers and professionals graduated from programs that focused on school-home collaboration, which means that they may not have the same quality and preparation when it comes to collaboration. Therefore, by providing these professional development opportunities, schools will offer the best opportunity for their teachers and professionals to increase and update their knowledge about recent practices, and ways for effective teamwork among teachers, families, and other professionals in school settings.

Conclusion and Implications for Future Research:

Based on this research review, in order to foster collaboration among families, teachers, and other professionals in school settings, there are three important components that must be considered. These components include understanding the cultural and social backgrounds of the students' families, providing support for families in school and at home, and training teachers and other school professionals to develop their collaboration skills. These components indicate that meaningful school-home collaboration requires schools and related agencies and administrations to do many things, ranging from training their teachers and other school staff how to work in a team with families from different backgrounds, to strengthening their relationship with families and supporting them in their children's education. This research review also indicates the positive influence of helping parents understand their rights and responsibilities with regard to their children's school on the outcomes of school-home collaboration. Therefore, several important areas should be addressed if schools and families are going to fully attain the students' educational goals. The families' ethnic background must be taken into account when working with them in order to know how to communicate appropriately with them. Schools should be more family-oriented than individually-oriented and should make more of an effort in terms of positively impacting the cultural and social system in their community.

Additionally, when providing appropriate support for families during their collaboration with schools, it is important for teachers and other professionals to not ignore the differences between the families' structures, characteristics, and needs. Lastly, it should be noted that there is an absence

of research about school-home collaboration that includes other professionals and related service providers in school, such as administrators, principals, speech-language therapists, psychical and occupational therapists, nurses, rehabilitation consultants, medical service providers, and social workers. Therefore, future research should focus on the roles and perspectives of these professionals in and outside schools in terms of collaboration with each other and with students' families. Future research also needs to understand the capabilities and collaboration skills of these professionals when it comes to working with teachers and families, to identify what support they need to be effective in a school-home collaboration context. When it comes to limitations, it is essential to point out that the studies reviewed in this research review were only conducted in the United States between (2004 and 2020). Also, the review did not aim to include studies that included students, decision-makers in school districts, and university faculty as participants.

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