Parent Engagement in the Transition From School to Adult Life Through Culturally Sustaining Practices: A Scoping Review

Courtney L. Wilt and Mary E. Morningstar

Abstract

The increasingly diverse population in the United States calls for schools to address the breadth of cultural histories students bring with them to the classroom. High school students with disabilities are also diverse in terms of cultural histories, race, ethnicities, religions, and citizenship. These factors intersect as families engage in planning for the transition to adulthood. A requisite for culturally diverse families with young adults who receive services under the educational category of intellectual disability (ID) are school professionals who can meaningfully collaborate. This review of literature from peer-reviewed journals seeks to understand if culturally responsive practices are utilized with culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) families during transition planning. This review also explored whether culturally sustaining practices strengthen partnerships between teachers and CLD families and adolescents with disabilities, including those with ID. Implications are associated with how teachers can perceive diversity from a strengths perspective as a vital component of transition planning.

The United States is a land of diverse racial, ethnic, sociocultural, and economic backgrounds (Lichter, 2013) yet, the dominant cultural lens through which educational systems and policies have been built, is that of the majority perspective (Blanchett, Klingner, & Harry, 2009). As the dominant culture, White middle-class families have had greater access to cultural capital, as well as social assets supporting social mobility (Reynolds, Crea, Medina, Degnan, & McRoy, 2014). Cultural and linguistic diversity (CLD) encompasses a broad range of racial, ethnic, and linguistic identities that fall outside of dominant cultural norms. For this study, the broad term of CLD is used for the purpose of centering the experiences and perspectives of families of students with disabilities who face systems of oppression that White, middle-class families of students with disabilities typically do not, such as racism, xenophobia, and linguicism. Individuals and families who are marginalized because of race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and culture may be further diminished by disability status. For example, students who are viewed through a medicalized lens of disability often result in exclusionary educational

practices (Skrtic, 2005). Harry, Klingner, and Hart (2005) discussed how the stigmatizing isolation of students in separate special education programs can corroborate additional exclusionary attitudes and practices toward CLD families. (The authors support the idea of disability as socially constructed, and promote the use of a support-needs model of disability. The subjective nature of professional judgement across school contexts implies that a diagnosis does not guarantee that a student has a disability [Harry & Klingner, 2006]. Students from nondominant populations are overrepresented in special education [Annamma, 2015]. The new paradigm of disability is contextual and societal: A support-needs model of disability addresses various supports an individual needs to participate in activities associated with normative human functioning [Thompson et al., 2009]. Throughout this article, the authors use the term "with ID" to indicate where students have been *perceived* to have ID based on social and environmental factors.)

Special education practices have historically marginalized CLD families, some have argued, by adhering to the rights associated with special education policies that may implicitly require

families to advocate for what they are entitled. Such a position is commonly unfamiliar and uncomfortable for many CLD families (Kalyanpur, Harry, & Skrtic, 2000). Traditional, professionalized mandates have been extended to the context of planning during the transition to adulthood for students in special education and particularly those with ID, given the long history of separate and inadequate educational experiences (Morningstar, Kurth, & Johnson, 2017).

Formal transition planning is typically time-oriented, formal, and laden with professionalized jargon. Unfortunately, transition planning for CLD families often mirrors marginalized school-family relationships, because the dominant cultural lens is most likely to be applied to all students and families (Kim & Morningstar, 2005). A lack of culturally relevant transition practices has been attributed to insufficiently meeting the needs of young adults with disabilities (Blanchett et al., 2009). For adolescents with ID, Martinez and colleagues (2012) found that parents attended individual transition planning meetings at a rate of just 56%. For CLD families, participating in transition planning may be occurring even less due to the systemic barriers discussed.

Parent Engagement in the Transition to Adulthood for Students With ID

Parent engagement in school is important for all students and has been found to lead to successful postsecondary education outcomes (Henderson, 2009). Henderson and Mapp (2002) concluded that there is a positive relationship between family engagement and improved academic achievement. This is true across socioeconomic, racial/ethnic, and educational background for students of all ages (Mapp, 2004). For adolescents with disabilities, parent involvement can promote active student involvement during transition planning (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Javitz, & Valdes, 2012) as well as improved self-determination (Morningstar et al., 2010). Research continues to demonstrate that parent involvement increases the likelihood of positive postschool outcomes for students with disabilities (Harry, 2008; Test et al., 2009). In light of this evidence, laws have been established to protect parental rights and transition planning procedures have been developed to encourage parental engagement.

According to the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, individuals receiving special education must have transition plans in their Individual Education Program (IEP) by the age of 16 years old. These plans should outline measurable postsecondary goals based upon the student's strengths, preferences, and interests. The parent participation requirements under IDEA require schools to follow communication, process, and service guidelines that afford parents involvement in the development of the IEP for their child. During transition planning, families can and should play an active role in supporting the student to achieve his or her vision for life beyond high school. In fact, for adolescents with ID, the role that families play is even more prominent and may require substantial engagement to ensure successful outcomes (Grigal, Hart, & Migliore, 2011). Parental involvement in transition planning has been operationally defined by Rowe et al. (2013) as, "parents/families/guardians are active and knowledgeable participants in all aspects of transition planning (e.g., decision making, providing support, attending meetings, and advocating for their child)" (p. 11). Methods to promote active parental engagement for CLD students with ID during transition planning often fall short during transition planning, as will be discussed next.

The transition from high school to adulthood marks a major life change for most young adults and families and is a time of growth albeit with increased uncertainty (Kim & Turnbull, 2004). Although mandates have been established ensuring students with disabilities and families are provided transition planning and services, the highly formalized approaches may be outside the realm of how CLD families typically engage. Evidence suggests many CLD families have little meaningful engagement during transition planning (Geenen, Powers, & Lopez-Vasquez, 2005). For instance, Newman and colleagues (2011) found that only 20% of transition IEP goals were determined by the parents and students overall, and only 26% of students with ID go on to any postsecondary education. Geenen, Powers, and Lopez-Vasquez (2001) noted CLD parents place importance on talking to their children about transition, helping their children to prepare for postsecondary education, and teaching children about their disability and culture. These families described themselves as active and involved in the transition process, however, they reported low involvement in school

because of the predominant formalistic planning procedures. In contrast, school professionals interviewed by Geenen and colleagues (2001) described these same CLD parents as minimally involved during transition. Little published research has been found since the Geenen et al. 2001 study regarding educator perceptions of CLD families. Thus, scant research and the IDEA regulatory approach favored by schools have not sufficiently supported family engagement as intended. Given such disconnects, it is critical to examine whether different approaches have emerged for supporting CLD families to participate in transition planning.

Teacher Impact on Transition Outcomes for CLD Youth With ID

Teachers' roles are paramount to achieving successful outcomes for CLD students with ID (Reynolds et al., 2014) as well as ensuring participation among CLD families (Blue-Banning, Summers, Frankland, Lord Nelson, & Beegle, 2004). Ladson-Billings (2005) found that teachers in general have traditionally been educated in ways that, perhaps implicitly, perpetuate racial and cultural inequalities. This bias can lead teachers to underestimate the true academic potential of CLD students (Annamma, 2015; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Widely held negative views among teachers toward families with children with disabilities who are living in poverty have persisted, which in turn can create a "we-they" divide between parents and schools (Harry et al., 2005, p. 111). For students with ID and their families, differing expectations among families and schools during transition may cause further disconnects. For instance, given that students with ID are more likely to be taught in separate classrooms, it may be that such experiences perpetuate beliefs about maintaining isolating postschool outcomes for adults with ID (Morningstar, Kurth, Wehmeyer, & Shogren, 2016).

Furthermore, teacher education often promotes professionalized norms that may conflict with the values and practices of diverse families and students (Annamma, 2015). Long-held beliefs of deficit-driven approaches to disability, particularly related to students with ID (Kozleski & Thorius, 2013), may compound transition expectations and practices. One unintended result may be the suppression of distinct linguistic and cultural practices that CLD students and families

bring during transition planning (Geenen et al., 2005). Although special education teachers can leverage supports for effective transition planning with CLD adolescents with ID and their families, a lack of culturally relevant practices may act as substantial barriers.

Culturally Sustaining Practices

It has been noted that a lack of culturally relevant school practices may lead to the overrepresentation of CLD students identified with disabilities (Artiles, 2015). Yet, many special educators do not know how to practice culturally responsive techniques (Trent, Kea, & Oh, 2008). In fact, special education teacher candidates have reported little or no knowledge of culturally and linguistically diverse practices (Scott, Alexander, Fritton, & Thoma, 2014). The lack of culturally responsive transition practices at the local level seems to be mirrored among state leadership. In a recent report, states reported little to no effort to implement recommended evidence-based practices supporting CLD families during transition (Gothberg, Greene, & Kohler, 2018). For instance, states were not supporting local educational agencies to (a) provide opportunities for parents of CLD students to connect with other CLD families through support groups, mentors, or community liaisons; (b) ensure special education personnel receive training about cultural competence to increase cultural sensitivity and reduce professional behaviors during transition planning; or (c) use person-centered planning approaches during transition planning with CLD students and families (Greene, 2011).

One approach noted among researchers as effective is culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012). This orientation promotes cultural pluralism within school to promote cultural equality. The notions of cultural responsiveness and reciprocity have been theorized as core concepts contributing to quality of life outcomes for families with children with ID (Kalyanpur & Harry, 2012; Turnbull & Turnbull, 2002), and serve as precursors to culturally sustaining pedagogy. Building on these ideas, culturally sustaining pedagogy during transition planning would take a stance of explicit resistance to systems perpetuating the dominant professionalized approach to transition.

Given that the most reliable predictors of parent involvement in school are specific school and teacher practices (Henderson, 2009), ap-

proaching transition planning with a focus on diverse parent representation would mean allotting school staff time for building collaboration with families. During transition for CLD youth and families, schools can cultivate various forms of meaningful family engagement such as that of advocates, student supports, and teachers approaching intercultural interactions as learning opportunities (Greene, 2011). A culturally sustaining pedagogy for transition would incorporate a strengths-based approach (Niemiec, Shogren, & Wehmeyer, 2017) to potentially impact supports provided to individuals with ID and their families.

As described previously, many CLD family have reported that transition planning experiences have been fraught with marginalization and isolation because of differences in perspectives of what transition means. In addition, low expectations and poor postschool outcomes for CLD students have been perpetuated among students with ID (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2012). Therefore, this scoping literature review examines recent research from peer-reviewed journals using a conceptual framework informed by culturally sustaining pedagogy. Given the continued concerns associated with ineffective transition planning and services for CLD youth with ID and families, the purpose of this research is to examine whether culturally sustaining practices are reflected within current research associated with transition planning for CLD families and youth with disability, including those with ID. Specifically, the following research questions were considered:

1. What are current barriers to engaging culturally diverse parents and families in transition planning?
2. What culturally sustaining practices have been identified specifically promoting family involvement in transition planning?

Method

A multistep process was used for this study. First, multiple and relevant keywords were identified for searches in established databases. Next, inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to each study to identify only relevant articles. An ancestral search was conducted on articles meeting inclusion criteria to identify possible missing research. Finally, coding categories were established by the lead author and agreed upon by both authors to

map the studies that met the inclusion criteria. Given the nascent focus of this research, the purpose of this scoping review was to better understand the current research associated with CLD families, transition, and youth with disability, including those with ID.

Inclusion Criteria

We used four inclusion criteria to identify relevant studies. First, we included only published research that focused on CLD families within the United States and who were engaged in the transition planning process. Next, we considered only empirical studies offering evidence from quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research designs. Third, we were only interested in research published in peer-reviewed journals. Finally, all studies had to have been published after 2004 until 2017. This date range was selected to explore research published subsequent to a similar review conducted in 2004 (Kim & Morningstar, 2005), as we were interested in the status of subsequent research pertaining to this topic.

Families of adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities were considered for inclusion; however, given the limited number of studies, we did not limit the search to only this particular group of students. Because of the emergent nature of the topic, limiting the search to only CLD families of youth with ID would have substantially reduced the scope of articles. However, all articles that met our inclusion criteria included CLD families of students with ID within the total sample.

Literature Search Procedures

We systematically identified studies using several strategies. First, we searched PsychINFO and ERIC using two sets of two constant terms and a rotating third term. The constant terms were [disabilit* AND transition] and [special education AND transition]. The third term rotated through the following: cultural diversity, culturally and linguistically diverse, parent engagement, parent involvement, parent participation, famil*, family-school partnerships, and family-professional partnerships. This yielded 825 articles. Second, issues of *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals (CDTEI)* and the *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability (JPED)* published after 2004 were searched to ensure that articles were

not missed during the electronic database searches. This effort yielded an additional two articles. Finally, an ancestral search of references from the identified articles were reviewed, yielding an additional 12 articles. This brought the total number of articles found to 839.

Next, titles and abstracts for all 839 articles were screened using the inclusion criteria, thereby excluding studies that did not involve CLD parents or families during transition to adulthood and students with disabilities, or that did not meet one of our other inclusion criteria (e.g., empirical study, peer-reviewed, U.S. schools). This screening removed 795 studies, leaving 44 articles. Another 37 articles were removed upon a further screening of the full article. Articles were excluded if they involved CLD families and children with disabilities, but did not target transition planning. This left seven articles that met the established inclusion criteria: empirical research focused on CLD parent and family engagement during transition. Studies were then coded for methodology and participant demographics. Codes associated with the two research questions (i.e., barriers to transition planning, culturally sustaining transition practices) were first described by the lead author and refined through an iterative process between both authors. Codes were developed and analyzed in order to synthesize results across studies.

The authors of this study state their positionality as White, abled, middle-class women. Because culturally and linguistically diverse students with disabilities and their families may experience oppressions not faced by the authors of this study, both authors continually challenge their own biases through reflection, dialogue, and engagement with personal connections to and literature written by and for CLD populations.

Results

The total number of participants in the seven studies was 115. All studies except for one included only parents or grandparents as participants. This remaining study targeted school professionals ($N = 22$) as well as parents ($N = 10$) and students with disabilities ($N = 8$) between 14 to 18 years of age (Povenmire-Kirk, Lindstrom, & Bullis, 2010). The 87 parent participants represented multiple cultural identities including: Latino (52%, $n = 45$), African American (18%, $n = 16$), Korean American (14%, $n = 12$), Native American (10%, $n = 9$), Asian

(2%, $n = 2$), or not specified (3%, $n = 3$). Families with immigrant status were reported in two studies, although exact numbers were not stated. Seventy-six percent of participants were mothers, 22% were fathers, and 2% were grandmothers. Across studies, students were identified under a range of disability categories. Parents of adolescents receiving services under the ID category were present in every study, although not every study reported exact numbers of students by disability category. Of the studies that reported data, 52% ($n = 21$) of the disabilities were described as severe (i.e., extensive physical and/or intellectual support needs), and 39% ($n = 16$) were identified as having ID. Other disabilities documented among the studies were epilepsy, deaf/hard of hearing and visual impairment, emotional disturbance, learning disability, and autism.

An unexpected finding was that all seven studies employed qualitative research designs, with three utilizing focus groups for data collection purposes. Two studies conducted both focus groups and individual interviews, whereas the remaining two conducted only interviews.

Barriers to Parent Engagement

Across all seven studies, the CLD parents reported barriers to engagement during transition planning (see Table 1). Themes that emerged as barriers were similar across the seven studies. Six out of seven studies reported both communication barriers and negative professional attitudes and a lack of acceptance. For certain studies, unique barriers were reported, such as past experiences with school professionals (Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010; Shapiro et al., 2004). Another common barrier, reported by three studies, was differences in beliefs about transition between school personnel and families. Finally, opportunities for community and social/emotional supports was reported by three studies (Hetherington et al., 2010; Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010; Rueda, Monzo, Shapiro, Gomez, & Blacher, 2005). Across all seven studies, participants reported specific cultural inequities and conflicts associated with transition planning procedures and experiences. Specific details associated with barriers are described next.

Communication and access to information. CLD parents reported an overall lack of communication and information about transition. Geenen's et al. (2005) study reported differences in linguistics as creating misunderstandings between

Table 1
Barriers to Engagement

Authors & Year	Communication	Access to Information	Professional Attitudes	Past Experiences	Lack of Community Supports
Geenen et al., (2005)	X	X	X	X	
Hetherington et al., (2010)		X	X		X
Kim et al., (2007)	X		X		
Landmark et al., (2007)	X	X			
Povenmire-Kirk et al., (2010)	X		X	X	X
Rueda et al., (2005)	X	X	X		X
Shapiro et al., (2004)	X	X	X	X	

school staff and families. In another study, immigrant families noted additional barriers due to unfamiliarity with the U.S. school systems (Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010). Three studies detailed parental frustrations due to limited access to transition information (Hetherington et al., 2010; Landmark, Zhang, & Montoya, 2007; Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010). Parents reported that a lack of knowledge about the transition process prevented them from meaningfully contributing to transition planning activities. Because these families had little or no transition knowledge, they were unable to meaningfully contribute to transition planning activities. Furthermore, families described feeling pressure to comply with a generic transition plan for their child. In another study, parents noted information about important transition topics often came too late, and that communication, language, and cultural barriers often got in the way of collaboration (Geenen et al., 2005).

Four of the seven studies reported that parents noted a general lack of knowledge about legal requirements for transition (Geenen et al., 2005; Hetherington et al., 2010; Landmark et al., 2007; Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010;). To illustrate, interviews with 19 CLD parents of adolescent students with disabilities indicated that 37% of the parents did not know what transition planning was, and 16% reported having minimal information about their own child's transition plan (Landmark et al., 2007). Additionally, Hetherington and colleagues (2010) found students and families were rarely engaged in transition planning. They noted that school staff were reported to be a barrier to receiving accurate and timely information because they were late in initiating collaboration with outside agencies such as vocational rehabilitation,

or by truncating the transition plan to the degree that there remained minimal meaning in their student's lives. The students and families from Hetheringon et al. described dissatisfaction during transition planning specifically because of insufficient communication with staff. Parents described battling with the school district to gain access to the knowledge required to support their children into adult life, and yet the school did not provide the needed information.

Professional negative attitudes. Overall, six of the seven studies reported CLD parents' frustration with educators who made assumptions about CLD students and families. Among the five studies that included linguistically diverse families, respondents reported perceived negativity from school professionals toward their children and themselves that they attributed to differences in culture and language (Kim, Lee, & Morningstar, 2007; Landmark et al., 2007; Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010; Rueda et al., 2005; Shapiro et al., 2004). For example, Kim et al. (2007) found that among 10 Korean American families, half reported adhering to traditional Korean norms of not questioning professionals even when they felt that teachers were being too negative toward their child. In another study, parents reported teachers were minimally engaged with families, primarily to satisfy paperwork requirements, which was viewed as maintaining negative teacher attitudes toward their children (Shapiro et al., 2004).

Three studies reported a disconnect between parents and school personnel related to culturally based attitudes and beliefs about the meaning of transition (Geenen et al., 2005; Rueda et al., 2004; Shapiro et al., 2004). Rueda and colleagues identified culturally based variations among the

16 Latina mothers of young adults with developmental disabilities from low-income, predominately Spanish speaking communities. For example, these Latina mothers valued basic life skills and social adaptation over academic skills; while placing importance on the family and home rather than individualism and independence. Geenen et al. reported that linguistic differences resulted in misunderstandings about transition between schools and families.

Past experiences and mistrust. Three studies found that special education experiences affected the quality of transition planning for families (Geenen et al., 2005; Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010; Shapiro et al., 2004). For example, families reported difficulty overcoming past negative experiences with schools, including feelings of being routinely ignored by schools, as well as dealing with high teacher turnover (Shapiro et al., 2004). Parents described wanting teachers to be aware of student and family life contexts and not focus on student deficits. Furthermore, these studies displayed a continued context of mistrust. Rueda and colleagues (2004) reported family perceptions that schools lacked overall effort, with limited consistency among student experiences, and teachers focused on student deficits. Furthermore, families reported that repeated negative treatment by school professionals led to mistrust (Shapiro et al., 2004).

Limited community supports. CLD parents reported barriers associated with a lack of community and school integration. This challenge surfaced in Povenmire-Kirk et al., (2010) interviews and focus groups with 22 school professionals, six students with disabilities between 14–18 years of age, and 10 Latino parents. These researchers found that concerns regarding documentation and citizenship, lack of culturally responsive practices, and limited school and community resources were barriers during transition. Many parents in this study reported cultural and family needs were ignored, with harsher disciplinary actions taken against their children. Geenen et al. (2005) reported that CLD families indicated a lack of teacher understanding of psychological, socioeconomic status, and contextual factors impacting parents and family life, which therefore rendered teachers unable or unwilling to provide information about needed community supports and services.

Summary. Almost all of the studies reported barriers faced by parents and families during transition planning. Many of the studies shared commonalities among these barriers including lack of communication, limited information, language barriers, a context of mistrust, and scarcity of positive experiences to build trusting relationships. In addition, families reported that professional attitudes about CLD families and differences in beliefs about transition were revealed as barriers to meaningful engagement. Across studies, these barriers seemed to intersect and confounded the capacity among CLD families to fully engage in transition planning.

Culturally Sustaining Practices

The second research question focused on identifying culturally sustaining practices that promote CLD parent involvement during transition planning. School transition practices were identified by the CLD families associated with promoting engagement and mitigating and mediating educator biases and assumptions. All studies reported practices promoting parental engagement, such as supporting community and parent groups. Culturally sustaining practices, when used by school personnel, fostered trusting relationships with families (see Table 2).

Communication. Communication with the school and teachers was the most frequently stated indicator of strong parent participation. Parents suggested positive strategies professionals can use, including preparing for transition at an earlier age and providing information about school-based transition planning (Geenen et al., 2005). Four studies explicitly described disseminating transition information to parents as a valuable support (Geenen et al., 2005; Landmark et al., 2007; Rueda et al., 2005; Shapiro et al., 2004). In one study, greater access to information was seen as a tool Latina mothers could use to pave the way toward increased services and to also serve as protection from negative assumptions among school personnel about student capabilities (Rueda et al., 2005). Other culturally sustaining communication supports identified were friendly and family-centered preplanning approaches, language supports, and accessible and individualized approaches to being invited to and participating in formal transition meetings (Landmark et al., 2007).

Culturally sustaining supports. A variety of culturally sustaining supports were identified across all seven studies. Community engagement by

Table 2
Culturally Sustaining Practices

Authors & Year	Communication	Culturally Sustaining Supports	Relationships
Geenen et al., (2005)	X	X	X
Hetherington et al., (2010)		X	
Kim et al., (2007)			X
Landmark et al., (2007)	X	X	X
Povenmire-Kirk et al., (2010)	X	X	X
Rueda et al., (2005)			X
Shapiro et al., (2004)	X	X	X

school personnel and social/emotional supports were suggested by CLD parents as tools to promote stronger participation in transition planning in five of the studies. Schools that engaged with the community were viewed as better in supporting meaningful transition planning. Parents recommended schools facilitate cultural liaisons to help with documentation and citizenship concerns, for placing and supporting students in community work experiences, and in connecting families to community resources (Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010). Two studies suggested schools organize and provide parent support groups as a specific strategy to increase parent engagement (Landmark et al., 2007; Shapiro et al., 2004). Another study suggested emotional supports for parents through informal community networks, support groups, or professional counseling (Geenen et al., 2005). Parents indicated that teachers can and should value students' native languages within the school context as a critical effort to show respect for students and families (Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010). Furthermore, families encouraged schools to develop transition goals that represented meaningful outcomes for family cultural values that were then linked to necessary transition services (Hetherington et al., 2010).

Relationships. Six of the seven studies reported the paramount importance of positive relationships between families and teachers and other transition school staff. Teachers who displayed empathy and respect for student and parent dignity were more likely viewed as partners in collaboration (Shapiro et al., 2004). Culturally sustaining practices that promoted positive relationships, which then facilitated parental involvement during transition planning included (a) personalized and accessible communication (Landmark et al., 2007), (b) social and emotional supports (Kim et al., 2007;

Landmark et al., 2007; Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010; Shapiro et al., 2004), (c) positive teacher perspectives about the cultural values of families (Rueda et al., 2005), and (d) strategies to build trusting relationships (Shapiro et al., 2004). Participants reported all such strategies contributed to meaningful collaboration during transition planning. Six of the studies noted that communication needed to be provided in a variety of forms and methods. As well, two studies reported teachers' openness to sharing transition knowledge and information about school and adult services was essential to building positive relationships between school personnel and family members (Kim et al., 2007; Povenmire-Kirk et al., 2010). Across all studies, parents reported that culturally competent professionals are more likely to utilize and understand the relevancy and importance of such culturally sustaining practices.

Discussion

Findings from this scoping review of research indicated that CLD families valued qualities associated with family-centered, culturally sustaining approaches to transition planning. Culturally sustaining transition practices are those that support the linguistic and cultural dexterity and plurality (Paris, 2012) that we believe are necessary for success during transition planning. Multiple barriers to culturally sustaining practices emerged in each study reviewed, and included lack of communication, limited access to information, negative and discriminatory school attitudes, mistrust, and limited community involvement. Families in the studies emphasized the role of communication, community and culturally relevant supports, and trusting relationships in their engagement with transition planning. This review

invoked implications for research and practice in implementing culturally sustaining transition practices with CLD families.

Limitations

Methodological limitations were present in this review. A limited number of databases, albeit comprehensive, were systematically searched, and thus some relevant research may be missing. Additionally, typical interrater reliability procedures were not incorporated into the procedures; however, the two researchers did review and agree to the screening and coding procedures and results completed for analysis of the qualitative data reported herein. Another limitation was that the rigor of the qualitative studies was not systematically evaluated. Given the emergent nature of this topic, the intention of the review was to provide a map of current practices. Finally, given the intended scope of the research aim—to examine research specific to CLD families during transition planning, and extending the prior review by Kim and Morningstar (2005)—the small number of new studies is concerning. Also, all but one of the included studies are a decade old or more, with the newest study 8 years old. It may be that schools have shifted toward more culturally sustaining practices across general education; however, this scoping review does not reflect these shifts, if they exist, and this is highly concerning.

Implications for Research and Practice

This review illuminated practices related to parental involvement during transition planning, specifically with CLD families. Implications for culturally sustaining practices for promoting collaboration in transition emerged. Two broad themes relevant to practice and research associated with school-family collaboration during transition emerged and are described next. The following are implications for the field of special education that may lead to higher quality supports for CLD families navigating the transition to adulthood with their young adults with disabilities.

Supporting teachers toward culturally sustaining pedagogy. Although many parents of students with disabilities have encountered reluctance by some professionals to view parents as equal partners in the decision-making process, special educators may have even greater difficulty acknowledging and appreciating the contributions of parents who are culturally diverse (Geenen et al., 2005). Similar to the prior review by Kim and Morningstar (2005), this scoping review revealed that, when CLD parents were involved in the transition planning process, they were mostly relegated to attending meetings as passive participants. A major concern among CLD families found across the studies in this review was the lack of culturally responsive collaborative planning and communication practices. For students with ID, keeping families up to date on transition processes and information through frequent communication is vital to meaningful and effective partnerships (Morningstar, 2017). Further still, relationships in which parents and students are valued as knowledge-holders and decision makers, with equal rights to information, should be the goal of transition practices.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 48% of teachers reported a lack of training in working collaboratively with families (Carey, Lewis, & Westat, 1998). Implications from this study, as perceived by family members, are that educators continue to be unprepared to communicate with CLD families, much less promote equitable parental involvement during transition planning. From the studies, it was revealed that only the professionals who possessed sociocultural perspectives of CLD students and families, and who went beyond regulatory mandates of transition IEP meetings were likely to display high expectations and positive attitudes towards students. These professionals were reported to be more likely to openly share transition process knowledge, to reach out, and to connect with families, and were thereby reported by families as trusted partners. An implication for future research is to examine innovative supports during transition and their impact on CLD students and families.

Culturally relevant pedagogy can facilitate positive and productive family partnerships and can extend family engagement through relevant community or cultural organizations (Blanchett et al., 2009). This concept of utilizing communities where CLD families currently seek support has recently been applied to transition outreach efforts (Nix & Morningstar, 2016). These authors advised transition professionals to seek out informal cultural networks (e.g., faith-based organizations, cultural centers) where CLD families already are supported to extend and enhance transition planning partnerships. Because many CLD families

turn to their community during transition rather than to formal institutions and service systems (Kim & Morningstar, 2005), schools should reach out to informal community networks and resources that families trust and relate to in meaningful ways. Furthermore, researchers should investigate the supportive practices of community networks during transition. Additionally, finding cultural liaisons who can bridge cultural gaps between transition professionals and CLD families continues to be warranted (Nix & Morningstar, 2016). For many communities, cultural liaisons can bridge the disparate perspectives of CLD families and schools (Leake & Boone, 2007).

Other aspects of needed teacher development are approaches to instill culturally sustaining beliefs, attitudes, and self-efficacy among educators regarding the transition to adulthood among diverse students and families. Educator preparation programs and ongoing professional development should include self-reflective approaches using a sociocultural (Harry, Rueda, & Kalyanpur, 1999) lens that can promote greater awareness of how contexts and personal histories shape individuals and their behaviors. A focus of teacher preparation should be on empowering educators to critique the meaning and value of existing practices and employ innovative approaches (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015) that meet the unique needs of their students. New research is needed on educator beliefs to inform the field in the development of teacher preparation programs that generate partnership-focused special educators.

It is important to keep in mind that the power of decision making typically lies within the hands of the professionals, especially in professionalized dynamics such as those occurring during transition planning. Therefore, it is often the school professionals who are in the best position to strengthen family-school partnerships (Geenen et al., 2005). Results associated with the lasting effects of past negative experiences for parents indicate a need for schools to establish family-centered strategies to counteract negative experiences. Implementing practices and evaluating the impact of promoting parent engagement that is aligned with the voiced concerns of CLD families is a critical next step and research agenda toward providing equitable and culturally responsive transition planning and services to all students and families.

Creating culturally sustaining school cultures. Increasing parental involvement was found to be most successful through positive communication, outreach to parents and community networks, social supports, and flexible meeting formats (Geenen et al., 2005). Such approaches can be considered culturally sustaining and, based upon the views of the CLD families, critical to improved transition collaboration. Results indicated the importance of school personnel actively responding to the context and influence of specific family cultures, as well as the multicultural contexts in which these families reside.

Parent training and information sharing has been identified as a predictor of transition outcomes (deFur, Todd-Allen, & Getzel, 2001), yet it is not a norm among secondary schools supporting parents through the complexities of transition planning, particularly those from diverse cultural backgrounds. Schools should go beyond minimal parental communication strategies associated with invitations to meetings, e-mails, and phone calls. Reciprocal and trusting relationships that are built over time through positive interactions with school staff are viewed as important to the facilitation of meaningful collaboration (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak, & Shogren, 2015).

Partnership-focused approaches must be accessible and welcoming to increasingly diverse families in order to lead to stronger mutual understandings of the purpose of transition planning, as revealed as important among the CLD families in this review. Other culturally sustaining practices, such as increased emotional support and flexible meeting formats, were viewed as encouraging to parental involvement (Geenen et al., 2005). Schools should facilitate forming parent groups where families can share knowledge and build community without power imbalances that can occur when school staff are present (Shapiro et al., 2004).

This scoping review revealed the importance of effective, culturally sustaining communication strategies as motivators to parent involvement. For families preparing for the transition to adulthood of their children with ID, transition planning should begin as early as possible to identify and secure needed supports (Morningstar et al., 2016). Recently, Hirano, and Rowe (2016) adapted an existing model of parent involvement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002) for families of adolescents with disabilities during transition planning. Their model emphasizes the continued role parents play once their child leaves school, and includes school values, beliefs, and interventions. A culturally

sustaining framework implied within Hirano and Rowe's model for parental involvement allows for variance in the underlying values defining what is normal and desirable, as well as in the timing and degree of expected developmental milestones within the transition process (Paris, 2012; Rueda et al., 2005). Research reviewed herein confirmed that when schools develop a welcoming, reciprocal approach to transition planning, they are better prepared to meet the needs of culturally diverse individuals and families (Geenen et al., 2005).

The socially constructed nature of collaboration during transition was highlighted in the results of this review. Such a collaborative stance requires translating the legalistic knowledge of transition mandates to meanings that are jointly formed by sociocultural understandings of the interactions among school, families, and diversity, and that leads to shared assumptions about the realities of transition from school to adulthood for diverse students. Further research in the area of family participation in transition planning through sociohistorical and culturally sustaining perspectives is necessary to achieve increased, positive and culturally valued postschool outcomes for young adults with disabilities. Further research related to CLD family participation during transition planning is important to the improvement of postschool outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including ID.

Studying diversity warrants caution given that individuals within groups often maintain individual characteristics that do not necessarily adhere to perceived cultural norms. Schools interpret IDEA mandates for parental involvement from a highly legalistic and professionalized perspective, which, as noted by the families in these studies, leads to inequitable transition expectations among schools and families. Given such disparate perspectives, schools and CLD families often have opposing views about transition and the best approaches to support youth (Geenen et al., 2005). Additionally, opportunities for mutual participation can be limiting for parents of culturally diverse backgrounds because of language barriers, past negative experiences, and approaches unresponsive to the family's culture.

The purpose of this research was to identify and understand if culturally sustaining practices were evident in transition research with CLD families, and how they are framed by the families involved. It can be deduced from this study that such practices can be used by professionals to support families during transition planning in order to facilitate more equitable outcomes for students and families. Teachers should adopt culturally reciprocal stances by taking into consideration ecological and historical aspects of family engagement (Harry et al., 1999). For example, school personnel should consider the family's expectations for a student's emergent responsibilities within the family's culture, as opposed to targeting goals of independent participation. Professionals and families together can set attainable and socially valued goals within the family's ecocultural context through culturally sustaining pedagogy. Welcoming school culture and trusting relationships with school staff are necessary for the development of meaningful collaboration during transition. Secondary educators exhibiting culturally sustaining transition practices through positive attitudes and assumptions about CLD families are more likely to promote positive and culturally responsive transition outcomes.

Conclusion

This scoping review sheds light on the difficulties CLD families of students with disabilities face when navigating the transition to adulthood planning process. Despite well-established positive associations between parent engagement and student outcomes, home–school partnerships remain insufficient during transition (Hirano & Rowe, 2016), especially for low-income and CLD families of students with disabilities (Kalyanpur et al., 2000). The results from this study indicate that overall, CLD parents of students with disabilities perceive limited support for meaningful collaboration with schools during transition planning. Unfortunately, the results from this study mirror many of the barriers presented by Kim & Morningstar (2005), leading to the conclusion that little change has actually occurred over the past few decades related to engaging CLD families and youth during transition planning. However, our analysis offers a unique lens through which educators can deepen their interactions with CLD families by valuing and actively seeking pathways to sustain and strengthen family voices during the transition planning process.

References

Annamma, S. A. (2015). Whiteness as property: Innocence and ability in teacher education.

The Urban Review, 47(2), 293–316. doi:10.1007/s11256-014-0293-6

Artiles, A. J. (2015). Beyond responsiveness to identity badges: Future research on culture in disability and implications for Response to Intervention. *Educational Review, 67*(1), 1–22. doi:10.1080/00131911.2014.934322

Blanchett, W. J., Klingner, J. K., & Harry, B. (2009). The intersection of race, culture, language, and disability: Implications for urban education. *Urban Education, 44*(4), 389–409. doi:10.1177/0042085909338686

Blue-Banning, M., Summers, J. A., Frankland, H. C., Nelson, L. L., & Beegle, G. (2004). Dimensions of family and professional partnerships: Constructive guidelines for collaboration. *Exceptional Children, 70*, 167–184.

Bridwell-Mitchell, E. N. (2015). Theorizing teacher agency and reform: How institutionalized instructional practices change and persist. *Sociology of Education, 88*(2), 140–159. doi:10.1177/0038040715575559

Carey, N., Lewis, L., & Westat, E. F. (1998). *Parent involvement in children's education: Efforts by public elementary schools.* Retrieved from National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) website. Statistical Analysis Report. https://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/98032.pdf

Carter, E. W., Austin, D., & Trainor, A. A. (2012). Predictors of postschool employment outcomes for young adults with severe disabilities. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 23*(1), 50–63.

DeFur, S. H., Todd-Allen, M., & Getzel, E. E. (2001). Parent participation in the transition planning process. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 24*(1), 19–36. doi:10.1177/088572880102400103

Geenen, S., Powers, L. E., & Lopez-Vasquez, A. (2001). Multicultural aspects of parent involvement in transition planning. *Exceptional Children. 67*, 265–280.

Geenen, S., Powers, L. E., & Lopez-Vasquez, A. (2005). Barriers against and strategies for promoting the involvement of culturally diverse parents in school-based transition planning. *Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 27*(3), 4–14.

Gothberg, J. E., Greene, G., & Kohler, P. D. (2018). District implementation of research-based practices for transition planning with culturally and linguistically diverse youth with disabilities and their families. *Career Develop-*

ment and Transition for Exceptional Individuals. Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/2165143418762794

Greene, G. (2011). *Transition planning for culturally and linguistically diverse youth.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Grigal, M., Hart, D., & Migliore, A. (2011). Comparing the transition planning, postsecondary education, and employment outcomes of students with intellectual and other disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 34*(1), 4–17.

Harry, B. (2008). Collaboration with culturally and linguistically diverse families: Ideal versus reality. *Exceptional Children, 74*, 372–388.

Harry, B., & Klingner, J. (2006). *Why are so many minority students in special education?* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Harry, B., Klingner, J. K., & Hart, J. (2005). African American families under fire: Ethnographic views of family strengths. *Remedial and Special Education, 26*(2), 101–112. doi:10.1177/07419325050260020501

Harry, B., Rueda, R. S., & Kalyanpur, M. (1999). Cultural reciprocity in sociocultural perspective: Adapting the normalization principle for family collaboration. *Exceptional Children, 66*(1), 123–136.

Henderson, A., & Mapp, K. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement.* Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Henderson, A. T. (2009). *Engaging families in the pathway to college.* National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. Retreived from http://dropoutprevention.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/SolutionsSlides_Feb2009.pdf

Hetherington, S. A., Durant-Jones, L., Johnson, K., Nolan, K., Smith, E., Taylor-Brown, S., & Tuttle, J. (2010). The lived experiences of adolescents with disabilities and their parents in transition planning. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 25*(3), 163–172. doi:10.1177/1088357610373760

Hirano, K. A., & Rowe, D. A. (2016). A conceptual model for parent involvement in secondary special education. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 27*(1), 43–53. doi:10.1177/1044207315583901

Kalyanpur, M., & Harry, B. (2012). *Cultural reciprocity in special education; building family-*

professional relationships. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

Kalyanpur, M., Harry, B., & Skrtic, T. (2000). Equity and advocacy expectations of culturally diverse families' participation in special education. *International Journal of Disability, Development & Education, 47*(2), 119–136.

Kim, K. H., Lee, Y., & Morningstar, M. E. (2007). An unheard voice: Korean American parents' expectations, hopes, and experiences concerning their adolescent child's future. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities, 32*(4), 253–264.

Kim, K. H., & Morningstar, M. E. (2005). Transition planning involving culturally and linguistically diverse families. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 28*(2), 92–103.

Kim, K. H., & Turnbull, A. P. (2004). Transition to adulthood for students with severe intellectual disabilities: Shifting toward person-family interdependent planning. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities, 29*(1), 53–57.

Kozleski, E. B., & Thorius, K. K. (Eds.). (2013). *Ability, equity, and culture: Sustaining inclusive urban education reform*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2005). The evolving role of critical race theory in educational scholarship. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 8*(1), 115–119. doi:10.1080/1361332052000341024

Landmark, L. J., Zhang, D. D., & Montoya, L. (2007). Culturally diverse parents' experiences in their children's transition: Knowledge and involvement. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 30*(2), 68–79.

Leake, D., & Boone, R. (2007). Multicultural perspectives on self-determination from youth, parent, and teacher focus groups. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 30*(2), 104–115.

Lichter, D. T. (2013). Integration or fragmentation? Racial diversity and the American future. *Demography, 50*(2), 359–391. doi:10.1007/s13524-013-0197-1

Martinez, D. C., Conroy, J. W., & Cerreto, M. C. (2012). Parent involvement in the transition process of children with intellectual disabilities: The influence of inclusion on parent desires and expectations for postsecondary education. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, 9*(4), 279–288.

Mapp, K. (2004). Family engagement. In F. P. Schargel & J. Smink (Eds.), *Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention* (pp. 99–113). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Morningstar, M. E. (2017). Transition to adulthood for youth with severe and multiple disabilities. In F. P. Orelove, D. Sobsey, & D. Gilles (Eds.), *Educating students with severe and multiple disabilities: A collaborative approach* (5th ed.). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Morningstar, M. E., Frey, B. B., Noonan, P. M., Ng, J., Clavenna-Deane, B., Graves, P., & Wade, D. B. (2010). A preliminary investigation of the relationship of transition preparation and self-determination for students with disabilities in postsecondary educational settings. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals. 33*(2), 80–94.

Morningstar, M. E., Kurth, J., Wehmeyer, M. L., & Shogren, K. A. (2016). High-quality educational programs for students with intellectual disability in high school. In M. L. Wehmeyer & K. A. Shogren (Eds.), *Handbook of research-based practices for educating students with intellectual disability*. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis.

Morningstar, M. E., Kurth, J. A., & Johnson, P. E. (2017). Examining national trends in educational placements for students with significant disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education, 38*(1), 3–12.

Newman, L., Wagner, M., Knokey, A.-M., Marder, C., Nagle, K., Shaver, D., & Wei, X. (2011). *The post-high school outcomes of young adults with disabilities up to 8 years after high school: A report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)*. (NCSER 2011-3005). Washington, DC: National Center for Special Education Research.

Niemiec, R. M., Shogren, K. A., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (2017). Character strengths and intellectual and developmental disability: A strengths-based approach from positive psychology. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, 52*(1), 13–25. Retrieved from https://search.proquest.com/docview/1868208664?accountid=14556

Nix, T., & Morningstar, M.E. (2016). *Perspectives of informal cultural networks: Providing outreach to culturally, linguistically and economically diverse families*. Unpublished manuscript.

Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational Researcher, 41*(3), 93–97. doi:10.3102/0013189x12441244

Povenmire-Kirk, T. C., Lindstrom, L., & Bullis, M. (2010). De escuela a la vida adulta/from school to adult life: Transition needs for Latino youth with disabilities and their families. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 33*(1), 41–51. doi:10.1177/0885728809359004

Reynolds, A. D., Crea, T. M., Medina, F. J., Degnan, E., & McRoy, R. (2014). A mixed-methods case study of parent involvement in an urban high school serving minority students. *Urban Education*, 1–26. doi:0042085914534272.

Rowe, D. A., Alverson, C. Y., Unruh, D., Fowler, C. H., Kellems, R., & Test, D. W. (2013). *Predictor implementation school/district self-assessment*. Retrieved from National Post-School Outcomes Center website: http://psocenter.org/content_page_assets/content_page_3/Predictor_Self-Assessment.final_06_24_13.pdf

Rueda, R., Monzo, L., Shapiro, J., Gomez, J., & Blacher, J. (2005). Cultural models of transition: Latina mothers of young adults with developmental disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 71*(4), 401–414.

Scott, L. A., Alexander, Q., Fritton, S., & Thoma, C. (2014). An evaluation of culturally responsive practices in special education program for preservice teachers. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching, 3*(2), 79–93.

Shapiro, J., Monzó, L. D., Rueda, R., Gomez, J. A., Blacher, J., & Taylor, S. J. (2004). Alienated advocacy: Perspectives of Latina mothers of young adults with developmental disabilities on service systems. *Mental Retardation, 42*(1), 37–54.

Skrtic, T. M. (2005). A political economy of learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 28*(2), 149–155. doi:10.2307/1593616

Test, D. W., Mazzotti, V., Mustian, A., Fowler, C., Kortering, L., & Kohler, P. (2009). Evidence-based secondary transition predictors for improving postschool outcomes for students with disabilities. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, 32*, 160–181.

Thompson, J., Bradley, V., Buntinx, W., Shalock, R., Shogren, K., Snell, M., & Yeager, M. (2009). Conceptualizing supports and the support needs of people with intellectual disability. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 47*(2), 135–146.

Trent, S. C., Kea, C. D., & Oh, K. (2008). Preparing preservice educators for cultural diversity: How far have we come? *Exceptional Children, 74*, 328–350.

Turnbull, A. A., Turnbull, H. R., Erwin, E. J., Soodak, L. C., & Shogren, K. A. (2015). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality: Positive outcomes through partnerships and trust* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Pearson.

Turnbull, A. P., & Turnbull, H. R. (2002). From the old to the new paradigm of disability and families: Research to enhance family quality of life outcomes. In J. L. Paul, C. D. Lavely, A. Cranston-Gingras, & E. L. Taylor (Eds.), *Rethinking professional issues in special education* (pp. 83–119). Westport, CT: Ablex.

Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). Preparing culturally responsive teachers: Rethinking the curriculum. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(1), 20–32. doi:10.1177/0022487102053001003

Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., Javitz, H., & Valdes, K. (2012). A national picture of parent and youth participation in IEP and transition planning meetings. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 23*(3), 140–155. doi:10.1177/1044207311425384

Authors:

Courtney L. Wilt, University of Kansas; and **Mary E. Morningstar,** Portland State University.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Courtney L. Wilt, University of Kansas, Department of Special Education, 1122 West Campus Road, Lawrence, KS, 66045, (e-mail: cwilt@ku.edu).