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Every Family Succeeds: The Contrast between Title I and Non-Title I Schools in Terms of Limited-English Proficient Parents' Engagement Experiences in their Children's Education

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to compare the engagement experiences of Limited-English Proficient (LEP) parents in urban public schools receiving Title I funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 with those in non-Title I schools within the same school district in the Midwestern US. Data were analyzed thematically and comparatively to explore the experiences of the participants. A major theme of LEP parents' lack of engagement in their children's education was revealed in non-Title I schools versus those in Title I schools. The study calls for a schemed federal monitoring process and a restructuring to schools' funding allocation in order to uphold LEP parents' civil rights and ensure the fulfillment of their needs as a matter of social justice.

Keywords: Engagement Experiences; Limited-English Proficient (LEP); Qualitative Study; Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); Title I Schools; Non-Title I Schools; Urban Public Schools

INTRODUCTION

The number of students whose primary language is other than English was 10.2% as of Fall 2018 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). According to Matuszny, Banda, and Coleman (2007), changes in student demographics continue to create challenges for the current education system. The contrasting demographics between student and teacher populations mean that educational professionals "may not be familiar with culturally embedded student behaviors, may not speak a student's or parent's language and, as a result, may not fully interpret all students' needs" (Matuszny, Banda, & Coleman, 2007, p. 24). Additionally, collaborative partnerships between schools and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) families remain elusive (Harry, 2008; Trent, Kea, & Oh, 2008). Neglecting to collaborate with CLD families creates barriers that can prevent CLD families from fulfilling their expected roles in their child's educational process, along with their linguistic challenges (Park, Turnbull, & Park, 2001).

Title I funding has been the largest federal program for K–12 education in the last 5 decades with an objective of eliminating the achievement gap between minority and nonminority students (ESSA, 2015). Under Title I, schools are required to build parents' capacity for engagement and help parents understand the Title I law and how to help their children. Almost every school district under Title I is required to spend at least 1% of its Title I funds on training and education programs for parents (ESSA, 2015). Additionally, parents must collectively develop and agree on the district and school's parent involvement policies, which should spell out how this allocated fund is spent.

Despite the above affirmation, the achievement gap continues to widen in many school districts and states. This study explored differences in engagement experiences among LEP parents of students attending both Title I and non-Title I schools within the same school district. Outcomes for this study can be used to help schools identify where to focus attention and allocate resources to improve LEP parental engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There continues to be a growing number of children from CLD backgrounds (*Impact | Volume 19, Number 3 | Providing Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services for Students with ASD*, n.d.). Harry (1992) argues that, in the 1990s, the US education system did not aim to understand, respect, or address the needs of CLD students and their families. Unfortunately, not much has changed since then. According to Harry (2008)

and Wolfe & Duran (2013), schools often create obstacles that hinder the path to successful collaboration with CLD families by remaining culturally unresponsive, failing to provide appropriate linguistic accommodations and translations, and demonstrating little respect for familial expertise and contributions.

Furthermore, schools serving diverse populations have long been criticized for having a deficit view of CLD parents. Some critics declare that educators view CLD families as "an obstacle" and marginalize them, giving all the attention to white middle class parents. Research reveals that CLD family members desire to be involved actively and share a deep concern about the education of their children but have not felt particularly welcome by schools (Benmaman & Trueba, 1988; Thorp, 1997).

It should also be noted that multiple studies have reported the low engagement of CLD parents (e.g., Hanline & Delay, 1992; Sharpio, 1996; Smalley & Reyes-Blanes, 2001) although research proves that higher parental engagement leads to better student outcomes (Jones & Velez, 1997; Bogenschneider, 1997). These positive outcomes for CLD students can be achieved when schools create collaborative partnerships with families (Blue-Banning et al., 2004; Gay, 2010; Haines et al., 2015; Harry, 2008). As Fults and Harry (2011) explained, "in a multicultural world, it is not possible to be family centered without being culturally responsive" (p. 28).

The concept of parental involvement in schools has developed significantly over the years especially under the complexity of school bureaucracy (Hiatt, 1994). The need for parent-school partnerships was first officially recognized by the formerly known Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA, 1965). Although this federal statute did not directly highlight parental involvement until its reauthorization in 1994, many scholars argue that it paved the way and shed light on the importance of parent and community engagement in children's education. In more explicit terms, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 required schools receiving federal funding to ensure LEP individuals meaningful access to programs and activities (Rosenbaum, 2004). Under the light of ESEA and conforming to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a research study was commissioned by the US Department of Education to learn about the disparity between segregated schools in the United States. This study was known as the Equality of Educational Opportunity (EEO) and dubbed as the Coleman Report. Beyond school quality, the report found that children who lacked support at home were severely disadvantaged (Nichol, 1966). In the years following, public laws and policies (e.g., Follow Through in 1967 and the Handicap Act in 1974) began to explicitly address the need for and

require family-school partnerships and allocate funds for this goal (McLaughlin & Shields, 1986). Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) corroborated the increasing recognition of home engagement and its responsibility for the socialization and education of children. Following, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001(NCLB), the 2001 reauthorization of the ESEA, provided a shift in parents' expected role (Webster, 2004). Parents became empowered decision makers in addition to participants and observers of their children's education. Title I, Section 1118 of the Act is primarily devoted to parental involvement, its principles, and its significance (Epstein, 2005). This has persisted through the Act's most recent reauthorization in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which provided more lenient requirements for states and flexibility for districts; for example, districts are only required to implement one strategy to engage families effectively.

In accordance with these policies, Ferlazzo (2011) argues that schools need to understand the difference between family involvement and family engagement, where the latter emphasizes doing *with* families, rather than doing *to* families, as implied by the former. Parent engagement is about engaging families to become partners with the school and listening to "what parents think, dream, and worry about" (Ferlazzo, 2011, p. 12). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015), which has been reauthorized eight times since 1965, uses the term "parent and family engagement" rather than parental involvement. The goal of family engagement is not to serve clients, but to gain partners.

To contrast the two, Ferlazzo (2011) compares school-to-home invitations: those that follow parent involvement often come through one-way forms of communication, such as notes sent home with the student, automated phone calls, or requests for assistance for a particular project, whereas those that arise from parent engagement tend to come as a result of *conversation*. Conversing with LEP parents cannot be accessible without providing interpretation services to ease the communication process. Moreover, Rodriguez, Blatz, and Elbaum (2014) reported a positive relationship between schools' successful facilitation of parental engagement and the frequent translation of materials into the parents' native language and provision of interpreters during meetings.

Researchers attribute LEP parents' lack of active involvement to language barriers, unfamiliarity with the educational system, and discouragement from school professionals (Chavkin, 1989; Campos, 2022). Along with social class and cultural differences (Lai & Vadeboncoeur, 2013) and an unavailability of transportation or child-care (Hayes, 2012),

these barriers can create tension and hinder LEP parents' engagement in their children's schools.

The study constructs its framework on Local Education Agencies' (LEAs) obligation to ensure meaningful communication with parents who have limited English proficiency under the nondiscriminatory requirements of Title VI and the EEO, as well as federal legal requirements discussed in the January 7, 2015, OCR's Dear Colleague Letter.

RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative Approach Rationale

Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter; it attempts to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena "in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Lincoln & Denzin, 2013, p. 3). According to Creswell & Guetterman (2021), qualitative research is especially useful when little is known about the problem at hand because it is explored at a complex level. A key characteristic of qualitative research is that it helps researchers understand people and how their backgrounds shape their experiences (Creswell & Guetterman, 2021).

Ensuing with this definition, the researcher gathered information on participants' engagement experiences through inductive qualitative research methods such as questionnaires and interviews (Lester, 1999), representing this information and these perceptions from the perspective of the research participants.

Phenomenological Method Rationale

This qualitative research followed a descriptive phenomenological approach to explore the participants' engagement experiences in their children's education. This approach aligns with the purpose of phenomenological research, which is to "record the experiences of another person's life" (Creswell, 2007, p. 55). "Phenomenology is the way of access to the world as we experience it pre-reflectively. Pre-reflective experience is the ordinary experience that we live in and that we live through for most, if not all, of our day-to-day existence" (van Manen, 2014, p. 26). Through interviews, phenomenology explores common experiences of participants to identify the essence of the experience (Creswell, 2013). Founded by German philosopher Edmund Husserl (Spinelli, 2005), phenomenology is considered a vital philosophy when researching to discover individuals' personal experiences (McLeod, 2012).

Descriptive phenomenology is defined by (a) intuiting, during which the researcher learns the phenomenon from participants' narratives,

(b) analyzing, which requires the researcher to identify emerging themes that are core to the phenomenon, and (c) describing, where the researcher explains the phenomenon in light of participants' experiences and themes found (Spiegelberg, 1975). This approach was selected as it is often recommended for under-researched topics (Giorgi, 1997). The researcher asked each participant to describe the interactions experienced with her/his child's school to encourage variability in their descriptive responses (Thomas & Pollio, 2002).

Research Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological, qualitative study was to describe the parental engagement experience of LEP parents in Title I schools and non-Title I schools within one school district. The findings gained from this study can help in relating theory to practice when revisiting the current guidelines and is given precedence based on these parents' needs for successful engagement. The study explored how such parents' thoughts, perceptions, and feelings impacted their levels of engagement in the learning of their children (Creswell, 2007).

Research Question

Through the experiences of 8 LEP parents, this study explores the following research question: What are the experiences of LEP parents in terms of meaningful engagement in their children's Title I and non-Title I schools?

Selection of Site and Participants

Data was collected at the Rally School District (pseudonym), which serves a large urban community in the Midwestern US. This district was selected because of the administration's willingness to participate in the study. To participate in the study, participants had to be unable to effectively communicate in the English language as identified by the school based on prior communication experiences. This criterion helped the researcher evaluate the engagement experiences of CLD parents who have limited English knowledge in their children's education. Invitations to the study were restricted to Arabic-speaking families to maintain participants' confidentiality and reduce the expenses associated with interpretations, since the researcher was Arabic-speaking.

Data Collection Procedure

First, the researcher conducted semi-structured questionnaires with the 8 LEP parents. Eckerdal & Hagström (2017) recommend the use of

qualitative questionnaires to generate informative data on the respondents' everyday life. Then, semi-structured interviews were chosen to allow the same parents to engage in conversations as well as discussions and give the researcher windows for questioning (Newton, 2010; Creswell, 2013). All parents were asked to describe their interactions and engagement experiences they had with their children's schools.

The researcher carried out a content analysis, a flexible method for analyzing text data, on the district's and each school's website in order to obtain a better understanding of the existing engagement efforts available for LEP families. The content analysis in addition to member checking and peer debriefing were used as triangulation to validate findings and enrich the trustworthiness of the qualitative inquiry (Hays & Singh, 2012).

The researcher collected data during the second semester of the 2018-2019 academic year. The school district facilitated four four-hour meetings at the Rally School District's administration building between the researcher and the selected parents. The first three meetings were dedicated for data collection while the fourth was for member checking.

Data Analysis Procedure

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) define qualitative data analysis as "working with the data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns" (p. 145); its aim is to discover concepts, critical themes, and meanings. To accomplish this, the researcher engaged in "open coding" (Corbin, 1990) to identify patterns and group parents' experiences into critical themes. Each part of the questionnaire and the interview was segmented and labeled with codes. Codes were examined for overlaps and redundancy, then collapsed into broad themes (Creswell, 2012).

Research Ethics

Approval for human subject research was first obtained from the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) as well as verification of translation consistency from the University's language department, as required by the IRB, after translating all documents from English to Arabic. Participation in this research was voluntary, without compulsion or obligation. Participants were also given the right to stop participating at any time with no consequences. During the data collection meetings, the researcher explained the study thoroughly and answered any questions before the participants signed the consent form.

FINDINGS

The researcher met with eight LEP parents from different Arabic-speaking countries, six mothers and two fathers. All names used in this study are pseudonyms. Most participants had recently arrived in the US, and were taking English classes. Children of two LEP parents, Peter and Belal, attended Title I schools and children of one parent, Daliah, attended a non-Title I school, while the other 5 parents; Safaa, Fajr, Hana, Amal and Farah, had children in both Title I and non-Title I schools.

During the questionnaire, all participants selected "language barrier" when asked about the main obstacle that hinders their engagement. Research shows that the language barrier is one of the most significant obstacles LEP parents must overcome to be fully engaged in their children's education (Jung, 2011; Brilliant, 2001; Thorp, 1997). The study reveals that the inaccessibility of interpretation services, as all participants with children attending non-title I schools emphasized, was the main obstacle to their engagement. Accordingly, an underlying theme of a lack of engagement at non-Title I schools compared to Title I schools developed.

On the other hand, at his children's Title I school, Peter expressed his satisfaction with the translation services he received that made him feel fully engaged. He was happy to be involved in events such as the school's Halloween Party and Father's Day. Similarly, when Belal was asked in the questionnaire about the current services his children's school offers to help keep him engaged in school activities, he selected the provision of translation services during meetings at the school. In the space provided, however, Belal added, *"*The translation services are only offered when the school requests the meeting, but not vice versa.*"* Participants' responses to personal interviews and their questionnaires are summarized in Tables 1-3.

Table 1

Participants' interview responses

Participants	Non-Title I School	Title I School
Daliah	I am not engaged in my children's education because of my limited English knowledge and lack of interpretation services. When I first arrived to the US, I did not understand the education system here, as no one had introduced it to my family in a way they could understand.	

Participants	Non-Title I School	Title I School
	I arranged my [school] visit with a friend who translated for me. My family was not aware of delays and closings announced by the schools through English voice messages.	
Fajr	I am not engaged in my children's education, as I do not know how to communicate with the school in English. I did not understand a word, as it was all in English and I was sitting among English-speaking parents. I don't understand a single word from the letters that are sent to me in English… If those letters were translated, I would feel more engaged in the school.	At my youngest child's school though, I usually call the school and request that I talk to the [Arabic-speaking] Para to understand the content of those letters. I went to a movie night with my child and I was happy that the movie had Arabic captions.
Farah	I am not engaged in my children's education, as I do not speak English. There were multiple incidents where I wanted to raise some concerns to my children's schools, but was unable to communicate with the school in English. There were multiple instances where I felt that the school should have contacted me as a parent and kept me informed when they did not. I was hoping that someone would contact me to assist with this but no one did…I feel that the language barrier discourages the school from keeping me informed. My struggle was when there was a 2-hour delay due to the weather or a cancelled school day. I did not understand the	

Participants	Non-Title I School	Title I School
	content of the messages sent to me and would send my kids to school in drastic weather conditions…I was unable to fill out the applications for after-school activities as they were sent in English.	
Belal		Translation services are only offered when one of my children's school requests the meeting but not vice versa.
Safaa	I am not engaged in all my children's education… There were two occasions when I urgently needed to interact with the school, but was unable to due to the lack of interpretation.	Interpretation services are available at only one of my children's school. I had volunteered at a trip there to the pumpkin fields before Halloween.
Hana	I usually ask a friend who can speak English and Arabic to accompany me.	Only the elementary school provided translation services during meetings.
Amal	I am not engaged in my children's education, as I do not know how to communicate in English with teachers and staff, and there are no interpretation services except at one school, which makes it difficult to raise any concerns. I assumed that they were talking about my daughter's learning goals.	Interpretation services are available at only one of my children's school. I was invited to almost 5 meetings to monitor my child's progress and the interpretation provided during each meeting was very helpful.
Peter		I'm very engaged in my children's school because interpretation services are available there. I went to the Halloween party and Father's Day celebration.

Note. Participants' responses were collected in May 2019.

Table 2

Participants' questionnaire responses

	Title I		Parents with children in both Title I & Non Title I schools					Non-Title I
	Peter	Belal	Safaa	Fajr	Hana	Amal	Farah	Daliah
	Q1: What services does the school currently offer that help you be engaged in school activities?							
Translation services during meetings	X	X						
Introducing a member from my community who speaks my native language								
English classes								
School website that explains district policies in my native language								
Other: Translation services, although not offered at all schools.			X	X	X	X	X	
Other: I arrange my visits with a friend who translates for me.					X			X
Other		Translation services are only offered when the school requests the meeting, but not vice versa.		Bilingual Para in one of my children's school.		My other child's school has yet to request to meet me.		

Note. Participants' responses were collected in May 2019.

Table 3
Participants' questionnaire responses

	Title I			Parents with children in both Title I & Non Title I schools				Non-Title I
	Peter	Belal	Safaa	Fajr	Hana	Amal	Farah	Daliah
	Q3: What can the school do to encourage LEP parents to attend more meetings/events and ease their communication with the school?							
Translation services during meetings	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Sending letters and voice messages in my native language	X	X	X	X			X	X
School website that explains district policies in my native language								X
Introducing a member from my community who speaks my native language						X		
English classes	X	X		X	X			
Other		Translation services, regardless of whether parents or school request meeting.						

Note. Participants' responses were collected in May 2019.

Lack of engagement in Non-Title I schools compared to Title I schools

Parents at non-Title I school, such as Daliah expressed, their lack of engagement due to their limited English knowledge and the unavailability of interpretation services at their children's schools. While completing the questionnaire, Daliah was asked about the current services her children's school offer that help her stay engaged in school activities. She answered in the space provided, "I have to arrange my visits with a friend who translates for me."

Daliah explained that when she first arrived in the US, she did not understand the education system, as no one had introduced it to her family in a way they could understand. Daliah stated, "My family was never aware of school delays and closings because we didn't understand what those voice messages were saying." Daliah also recalled when there was an online threat to the school at the previous district, and the school administration had to call all parents to assure them that kids were safe. However, Daliah did not understand what had taken place until her children came home and explained to the rest of the family.

Parents with children attending both Title I and non-Title I schools, could not justify the paradox of services they received within the same school district. For example, during the questionnaire portion and as indicated in Table 1, when Safaa, Fajr, Hana, Amal and Farah were asked about the current services offered by their children's schools that made them feel engaged in their learning, none of the parents selected a choice, but added in the space provided that only one of their children's schools provided translation services during meetings while the other schools did not. For example, Fajr expressed her needs for interpretation services. She explains,

> One of my children's schools has an Arabic-speaking Para in class… this really helps with some of the communication issues… but I get letters sent with my child that I don't understand, so I have to call the school and talk to the Para to get an explanation. This is not offered at my other children's schools, so it is even more difficult for my family to express our concerns or just communicate with the school.

When Fajr was asked about the obstacles that hinder her engagement at her children's schools, she stated that she did not understand "a single word" from the letters that were sent to her in English. She also indicated that if those letters were translated, she would feel more engaged in the school system, as she would be aware of what was going on. Fajr then described her interactions with her children's school, saying,

> I was invited to one parent meeting at the beginning of the academic year for each of my children, but I did not really understand what was going on; it was all in English and I was sitting among English-speaking parents.

On the other hand, at her child's Title I school, she attended a movie night and stated that she was happy that there were Arabic captions were provided. In a similar manner, when Farah was asked in the questionnaire about the current services her children's school offer to help her be engaged in school activities, Farah answered that translation services were offered during meetings with parents at only one of her children's schools, and that she considered it the most effective way to foster a mutual understanding between schools and LEP parents. When asked to describe any interactions she had with her child's school, Farah expressed her frustration that there were multiple incidents where she was unable to communicate with the school in English. Farah, justifying LEP parents' need for translated messages, stated,

> My struggle was when there was a 2-hour delay due to the weather or a cancelled school day… I did not understand the content of the messages sent to me and would send my kids to school in drastic weather conditions, and they would return after realizing that school was cancelled that day.

Amal also reported that she was invited to an IEP eligibility meeting to determine whether or not her daughter, who attends a non-Title I Junior High school, qualifies for special education services and an Individualized Education Program (IEP). There was no interpretation during the meetings and Amal was left assuming that they were talking about her daughter's learning goals. Amal also explained that her daughter did not understand English yet and had difficulties in her classes, because instructions were given to the student in English from American teachers.

Incoherently, at her other two children's Title I school, Amal was invited to almost five meetings to monitor her children's progress and she stated that the interpretation provided during each meeting was very helpful. She reported that they made progress because of an Arabic-speaking ESL teacher's support in all their classes. Amal also stated in the space provided that her other child's school (non-Title I) has not yet requested to meet with her.

When parents were asked to suggest ways that the school could encourage LEP parents to attend more events at the school, they all recommended translating letters and voice messages that are sent home and providing interpretation during meetings at the school regardless of who

requests the meeting. In addition, some parents noted how helpful it would be to see the school website, which contains vital information, translated to their native language. They also emphasized that facilitating English classes would be the most effective tool that would greatly boost their engagement levels.

Content Analysis

An analysis of the Rally School District, Title I and non-Title I schools' websites, used as a triangulation assessment tool (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992), revealed the existence of well-structured and informative school webpages. Nevertheless, they are only offered in English, depriving LEP parents to benefit from their contents. The researcher was informed from the website about the existence of English classes that were offered within the district. However, participants were not aware of such services because they could not locate the information in their native language. The researcher was a key person in introducing the service to participants and helping them understand the expectations of the program.

Additionally, both the district's and the Title I schools' websites explain guidelines for parent and family member participation in Title I programs in English. Again, this deprives LEP parents from being acknowledged of the services offered at their children's school. No activities have been recognized for LEP parental engagement on non-Title I schools websites.

Even though some non-Title I schools hosted parent clubs and programs, they appeared as a monoculture effort for a homogeneous group of parents. Hallgarten (2000) describes parental involvement as a 'lever' that maximizes the potential of the already advantaged parents by involving them to reflect the norms and values of the school while overlooking those hard-to-reach parents who will freely embrace the cultural image of the school.

DISCUSSION

Research emphasizes the continued growth of culturally and linguistically diverse students in American classrooms (Xu, 2007), and the need to provide culturally sensitive and responsive services for this population as well as professional development for school personnel (Turnbull et al., 2015; McHatton, 2007). In this study, most parents whose children attend non-Title I schools stated that they were not engaged in their children's education because of a lack of interpretation services. In suffering tones, participants voiced their urgent *need* to understand the information delivered to them in meetings, texts, and letters.

Farah and Daliah explained their struggles when there was a 2-hour delay due to the weather or a cancelled school day. They would not understand the content of the voice messages sent to them and would send their kids to school in drastic weather conditions, and their kids would return after realizing that school was cancelled that day. Additionally, Amal's child's non-Title I school had not requested meeting with her yet. Amal reported that she was invited to an IEP eligibility meeting for her daughter in junior high school. There was no interpretation during the meetings, and she assumed that they were talking about her daughter's learning goals. This observed parental struggle is in direct conflict with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Equal Education Opportunity Act (EEOA, 1974). These policies and laws exist to ensure that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have obligations to develop and implement a process for determining whether parents are LEP and what their language needs are to provide effective language assistance with appropriate, competent staff or appropriate and competent outside resources.

Moreover, parents who have children in both Title I and non-Title I schools could not justify the differences in service delivery among their children's schools and were unable to describe the Title I parental involvement policy although not only their agreement but also their evaluation for the effectiveness of the existing policy is federally mandated by ESSA (2015). This observation uncovers an alarming uncertainty and leads to the question: Do LEP parents genuinely have a voice in Title I schools' parental engagement policy? The answer to this question has been declared by Robinson-Cimpian, Thompson, and Umansky (2016) when they confirm that the current education policies limit English Learners' access to equitable educational opportunities and puts them at a disadvantage compared to their monolingual peers.

Lewig et al. (2010) explain that culturally and linguistically diverse families often want to help, but they are unable to access services such as language and transportation (Conroy, 2017), making it difficult for them to attend school functions (Finders & Lewis, 1994; Pena, 2000). Based on the Title I school policy, meetings with parents of children receiving Title I services must be scheduled at convenient times with assistance such as childcare and transportation. Farah, and Fajr, whose children attended both Title I and non-Title I schools, added the transportation barrier to the language barrier, as neither of them had drivers' licenses and were unable to reach any of their children's schools.

Further, Schneider, Martinez, and Owens (2006) encourage English language proficiency in CLD students and parents at the earliest possible

stage and indicate that it is likely to lead to a stronger foundation for academic achievement. Parents can greatly benefit from school-community collaboration efforts to provide literacy programs, translators at school-related activities, advice on academic help, and community outreach programs (Schneider, Martinez, & Owens, 2006). This directly concurs with Peter, Belal, Fajr and Hana's recommendation for schools to offer English classes to LEP parents to encourage engagement. Hana stated that she started joining English classes a couple of years ago, which helped her to start communicating with her children. Teaching English to CLD parents helps them support their children in education (Staff, 2008) and ultimately leads them to becoming more involved in their children's education.

On the other hand, parents, such as Peter, whose children attended Title I schools, referenced the interpretation services there and how much they impacted his engagement. Whereas Belal, whose children also attend Title I schools stated, "The translation services are only offered when the school requests the meeting, but not vice versa." This alerts us of Title I schools' complacency when basic needs such as translation services are provided to LEP parents in terms of one-sided support, which violates both the accessibility section of ESSA (1116[f]) and the school-parent compact section (1116[d][1-2]), which was generated to ensure regular two-way, meaningful communication between family members and school staff, and to the extent feasible, in a language that family members can comprehend.

CONCLUSIONS

The major theme that emerged answered the research question. Seeing non-Title I schools overlook LEP parents' needs for engagement in their child's schooling, a process that has worn parents out and made them feel incapable, was very unfortunate. There was an evident denial of linguistic service provision that is obligated under Title VI and the EEOA, which would ultimately lead to undesired segregation. It is easy to place the responsibility of engagement on families. However, schools must understand the circumstances that LEP parents are in, especially those who only recently arrived in the US. One argument here may be that non-Title I schools do not have the resources needed to provide these services to families. However, school districts have obligations to analyze their budgets to see if resources have been allocated primarily based on a student's need.

Lynch (1992) and Conroy (2017) explained that when language constitutes a barrier to CLD families and hinders their engagement, a cultural guide or liaison could be useful. Identifying someone from the family's culture who speaks the same language and can act as a mediator

and translator can help the school better understand families from a particular culture. However, this does not waive contacting the family directly and building a professional partnership with them.

Schools can also foster LEP parents' engagement by providing interpretation services during meetings regardless of who requests them and translating documents, forms, letters, and voice messages. The school website should be translated to other languages at schools where majorities of CLD parents are served. Conclusively, this study intended to initiate an essential dialogue to gain policy makers' attention on Limited-English Proficiency (LEP) parents' needs by delving into their day-to-day suffering at non-Title I schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although all schools, whether they receive Title I funds or not, are federally obligated to provide LEP parents with translation, those services are currently limited to Title I schools that are obliged to by Section 1116 of ESSA's Title I. This fact deprives parents in non-Title I schools from being engaged in their children's education and is in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the EEO. This injustice throws light on fund misallocation with no regard to students' needs and promotes the fact that districts should adopt more effective strategies when determining where funds are allocated. Therefore, a schemed federal monitoring process may provide additional insight into the current regulations and will uncover areas needing more attention. Also, school districts may need to consider funding allocation reform through utilizing a Weighted Student Formula (WSF) approach for schools' funding allocation within the same district to avoid inequities and disparities between schools.

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