

Community–Academic Partnerships in the Community Engagement Literature: A Scoping Review

Emily Janke, Santos Flores, and Kathleen Edwards

Abstract

This article contributes a novel dataset mapping the partnership literature in the community engagement field and invites scholars of community–academic partnerships in this field to participate in the development of scoping reviews as a way to effectively scan extant literature as they seek to build upon or critique it. This scoping review includes key article-level characteristics regarding the representation of community–academic partnerships within 141 published articles from seven peer-reviewed journals in the community engagement field.

Keywords: scoping review, systematic review, partnerships, community-engagement, scholarship



Community engagement is yet an “emerging field” (Giles, 2019) that has come to present a distinct view and ethos about the role and practice of higher education in and with communities. In the formation of the field, scholars have contributed a new understanding and practice of community-engaged scholarship, most notably community engagement pedagogy and epistemology (Sandmann et al., 2008). Since the launch of the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (MJCSL), the first journal in the field, in 1994, nearly a dozen scholarly, peer-reviewed journals have been initiated as a way for scholars to share research and conceptual scholarship about a range of topics related to community engagement.

Community engagement journals advance the “scholarship on the scholarship of engagement” (Sandmann, 2008, p. 99) as they continue to articulate defining aspects of community engagement, including key purposes, practices, processes, and outcomes. Journals in the field publish articles that address many different aspects of community engagement, including pedagogy, epistemology, research methodology and other scholarly approaches, institutional change models, and partnership development and ethics, to name a few.

Commemorating the 20th anniversary of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* (JHEOE), the editor of the journal published a book that included previously published articles from JHEOE that had the greatest impact on scholarship and practice. In an effort to frame future-looking conversations by revisiting past scholarship in light of current contexts, the authors of the selected articles were invited to revisit, comment on, refute, or update their earlier writing (Sandmann & Jones, 2019). Judith Ramaley, a three-time president and foundational leader in the institutionalization of community engagement in higher education, shared her view of the first 20 years of scholarship, reflecting on the changes that must yet be addressed by scholars of engagement. Ramaley (2019) called on scholars to reexamine and rearticulate what scholars of the field mean by “community voice” as an aspect of practice and scholarship (p. 257). On the topic of community voice, Ramaley pointed to increased awareness of and attention to issues of social equity and social justice and especially to communities as intellectual spaces. How is knowledge that resides outside the disciplines recognized and integrated into academic scholarship? How are the voices of underrepresented, marginalized, and dis-

enfranchised individuals taken into account when we say that we have included community voice as an aspect of our scholarly process?

The call for continued focus on community engagement partnerships echoes earlier calls. For example, Gelmon et al. (1998) called on the emerging field to develop scholarship that addressed various aspects of partnerships, including

- the challenge of distinguishing service-learning from community-based clinical training experiences,
- community perspectives of the university and partnerships,
- reciprocity and mutuality in community-university relationships,
- social and economic benefits arising from the community-university partnership,
- benefits for community organizations participating in university partnerships, and
- motivations for universities to respond to community perspectives (p. 97).

Our review of the scholarship shows that key aspects of early writings about community engagement partnerships were focused primarily on (a) how to define them differently from other forms of relationships that occur between academic and community-placed or community-focused organizations, (b) the identification of key principles and practices for ethical and effective community-engagement partnerships, and (c) the description of partnership activities and programs as examples from which others could learn.

Other scholars have suggested that there is a paucity of high quality studies that advance the understanding of how and why partnerships work. As Hart et al. (2009) shared of their own experiences looking for articles relevant to establishing community-university partnership services: “It is not that there is a lack of imaginative practical activity. . . . Rather, there is a relative lack of research focused on the processes by which higher education institutions establish community partnerships and how they are sustained” (p. 48). Jones and Lee (2017) found a “lack of attention” to community voice in their review of articles published

from 2005 to 2014 in JHEOE (p. 178). The authors wondered whether the paucity of studies on partnerships was unique to the journal itself, or whether this was true across other community engagement journals as well.

The partnerships section editor of the *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement* (IJRSLCE), Alan Bloomgarden (2017), also lamented that the partnership literature was “woefully thin” (p. 21). He called for the development of robust scholarship focused on the where, how, when, and why that community engagement partnerships contribute (or not) to community priorities. Partnerships, he observed, tend to be represented as context or a factor related to student learning and other academic priorities. As a result, readers of the literature tend to get peeks into the nature and structure of partnerships rather than receiving a robust description and assessment of the partnerships themselves and, importantly, the ways in which partnerships serve community-identified priorities.

This article examines and describes a subset of the scholarship of engagement literature: partnerships that occur among academic and community collaborators (herein referred to either as community engagement partnerships or simply partnerships). Our guiding question is “What is the state of the partnership literature in the field of community engagement?” Our goal was to curate the literature in which the partnership served as a key, if not the primary, focus of the article. Therefore, we conducted a scoping review to collect and describe the partnership literature as represented across seven peer-reviewed community engagement journals. The result of this effort is the contribution of (a) a scoping review as an emerging research strategy that can help to advance scholarship in the field of community engagement, (b) a novel dataset of all articles that address community engagement partnerships across seven journals in the field, (c) a catalogue with descriptive statistics of key partnership characteristics of the articles curated, and (d) an invitation to other scholars to advance the scholarship of engagement on partnerships by participating in the expansion of this scoping review, to use scoping review techniques shared in this article to address other topics, or to use the scoping review dataset to ask new research questions.

Types of Reviews

Scoping reviews are relatively new to the cadre of strategies designed to systematically collect and, to varying degrees, synthesize research on a specific topic (Pham et al., 2014). As the name suggests, a scoping review is a strategy to determine the scope, or coverage, of a body of literature. The effect of conducting such a review is the construction of a map of the literature, which can be used to understand the present landscape and as the basis for conducting future analyses and research. Because scoping reviews are new to the field of community engagement—we found only one published scoping review, about defining community engagement, in our search (see Beaulieu et al., 2018)—we orient the reader briefly by comparing scoping reviews to two other likely more familiar types of review: literature reviews and systematic reviews.

Literature Review

The most common approach used to bring relevant knowledge to bear on a topic is the literature review. For many, a literature review is a component of a larger study and serves to situate the study with regard to existing knowledge; it entails looking for articles related to the topic of initial research or inquiry. In this way, it demonstrates that one has considered the ideas of others who have published in the same or a similar area. In their essay written for graduate students about to embark on dissertation research, Boote and Beile (2005) shared the importance of *generativity*, Shulman's (1999) idea that scholarship and research must build on the scholarship of those whose work has come before. A literature review reports the claims made in existing publications while also critically examining the research methods used to make the claims.

A literature review may also be the focus of a publication. An author may seek to present a comprehensive overview of the knowledge of a particular topic, including substantive findings, inquiry frameworks, and methodologies. For example, Dostilio (2017) coordinated the contribution of a comprehensive literature review of community engagement professionals (CEPs) in an effort to establish a “competency model for an emerging field” (book title). Teams of authors thoroughly scanned the literature in the community engagement field to generate a comprehensive list of

competencies and personal attributes of CEPs. The findings of the literature review then informed the development of a survey for CEPs to further explore patterns, including gaps, in the literature. As Kowal (2017) wrote of the book, “The value of this extensive work lies in its ability to communicate the dimensions of a vast and varied field” (p. 181). The review of the literature can be used to discern the range and prevalence of ideas within a body of literature, and to synthesize the ideas that shape the collective conversation. In our review across seven journals in the community engagement field, we found no articles offering a comprehensive review of the partnership literature.

Systematic Review

A second type of review commonly used to synthesize the knowledge generated on a topic (particularly in the health professions) is a systematic review. A systematic review is important for understanding the extant body of work related to a particular intervention so that one may understand, for example, whether there is consensus around best practices or the efficacy of the intervention. An example is Drahota et al.'s (2016) article “Community–Academic Partnerships: A Systematic Review of the State of the Literature and Recommendations for Further Research.” The team of 10 authors reviewed literature across multiple disciplines and major academic databases (e.g., ProQuest, ERIC, PubMed) to identify the most common influences that facilitate or hinder community–academic partnerships (their term). The authors noted that although “the amount of published literature on collaborative groups has increased dramatically in recent years, it still lacks consensus and systemic review” (p. 167). They sought all systematic evaluations of the collaborative process among partnerships that (a) included at least one academic and at least one community stakeholder, (b) had been peer-reviewed, and (c) were written in English. Unlike a literature review, which is often undertaken by a single scholar and includes only those articles most germane to the study, in this systematic review scholars sorted through the titles and abstracts of 1,332 articles to then complete a full text review of 630 articles in order to find the 50 articles that ultimately met the criteria for inclusion in their study. Their aim was to collate empirical evaluation evidence from

a relatively smaller number of studies pertaining to their focused research question. The team used an a priori protocol, which was updated iteratively during the systematic review, as well as strategies to ensure consensus on the issue of whether they used an objective evaluation method.

Scoping Review

A third type of review, and the method used in this article, is a scoping review. Scoping reviews have also been called “mapping reviews” because they “map the key concepts that underpin a field of research, [additionally they] clarify working definitions, and/or the conceptual boundaries of a topic” (Joanna Briggs Institute [JBI], 2015, 1.1.1). Scoping reviews are most appropriate to address the following six purposes:

- to identify the types of available evidence in a given field,
- to clarify key concepts/definitions in the literature,
- to examine how research is conducted on a certain topic or field,
- to identify key characteristics or factors related to a concept,
- as a precursor to a systematic review, or
- to identify and analyze knowledge gaps (Munn et al., 2018).

First described by Arksey and O’Malley in 2005, scoping reviews have been precisely refined to the point that stepwise protocols for both conducting and writing about scoping reviews have been established (see Peters et al., 2020; Pham et al., 2014; Tricco et al., 2016). The PRISMA-ScR (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Assessments—Scoping Reviews) checklist is one such resource designed to increase consistency of scoping reviews (Tricco et al., 2016).

In this section we have defined three similar yet unique methods for reviewing literature about a topic: literature review, systematic review, and scoping review. The purpose of this effort is to enable readers, through insight into the three methods, to make more informed decisions about what sort of method will best serve their future research at different times. For a deeper description of the defining characteristics of traditional literature reviews, scoping reviews, and

systematic reviews, we encourage readers to review Munn et al. (2018).

Because scoping reviews are a new technique and born in the health professions, we found only one scoping review on the topic of community engagement (Beaulieu et al., 2018). The scoping review included 48 articles with the aim of clarifying the definition of *engaged scholarship*. Their results presented an article-level review of the values, principles, and processes of partnerships put forward in the literature. Values included social justice and citizenship, and principles included high-quality scholarship, reciprocity, identified community needs, boundary crossing, and democratization of knowledge. They presented an engaged scholarship schema and defined engaged scholarship

as a true academic posture, rooted in values of social justice and citizenship, that prompts academics and universities, in their roles of teaching, research, and service to society, to work in ways that will build mutually beneficial and reciprocal bridges between university activity and civil society. (“Engaged Scholarship Schema,” para. 1)

Systematic and scoping reviews are common within the health sciences (Pham et al., 2014) but have not yet found their way into the literature of the community engagement field. Through previous publications (e.g., Bringle et al., 2013), scholars have demonstrated great benefit by bringing theory and research from cognate areas to the field of community engagement. Our scoping review about community-academic partnerships may serve as an example of the usefulness of applying new research methods to community engagement topics.

Community Engagement Partnership Scoping Review

This study did not start out as a scoping review, but we ended up conducting one out of necessity. Initially we wanted to develop a dataset consisting of works that would allow us to pursue a specific research question: What types of conflict occur within community engagement partnerships? We wished to bring theories developed in the conflict and peace studies field into the community engagement field as a way to help increase competence and confidence

of community engagement professionals in this area of work (Janke & Dumlao, 2019).

Our first step was to identify articles in the community engagement field that could help readers understand community–academic partnerships, specifically why and how they do and do not work. Our interests were practical. To interrogate the literature in order to identify the presence of conflict and conflict management practices among community engagement partners, we needed to be able to (a) identify and cull partnership studies from the broader community engagement literature, (b) sort the articles according to various partnership types so that we could understand the varied characteristics and contexts of the partnerships, and (c) examine how various levels and aspects of conflict were or were not addressed in the literature. We faced several challenges.

The first challenge was identifying partnerships articles within the community engagement literature. Broadly, we attempted to identify all articles that could tell us how and why partnerships work. Although some articles use the partnership as the unit of analysis or the object of inquiry, more often, partnerships are included in a limited and ancillary way. For example, authors may describe aspects of the partnership, such as whether it was part of a service–learning course or an international service project—as a factor of or in service to other goals, such as student learning and development, completing a research project, or fulfilling an institutional service mission (Bloomgarden, 2017). In such articles, we found that partnerships tended to be described poorly and without important details, and the “lessons learned” tended to be offered in anecdotal ways that were not grounded in theory or connected to extant scholarship.

The second challenge was inconsistency of the information shared about partnerships and the difficulty of comparing “apples to apples” across different types of partnerships. We wanted to know how conflict relates to the type of partnership. Authors and editors tend to apply the term *partnership* to a wide array of relationships between and among individuals, groups, and organizations as well as in reference to varying types of formal and informal agreements (Bingle et al., 2012; Dumlao & Janke, 2012). Since Cruz and Giles (2000) called for scholars to advance understanding of service–learning

partnerships using the partnership itself as the unit of analysis, the body of scholarship related to partnerships has increased, yet this literature has continued treating all partnerships as though they are essentially the same, applying common guidance, expectations, and principles to all. We needed a map so that we could begin to purposefully sample the literature for a focused research project on the subtopic of conflict in community–academic partnerships.

The desire to create a scoping review to then allow for subsequent research studies is consistent with Tricco et al.’s (2016) finding: The three most common reasons for conducting a scoping review were to explore the breadth or extent of the literature, map and summarize the evidence, and inform future research. In pursuing our goal, we learned about the value of scoping reviews in and of themselves—as a way to map the literature in the particular area of partnerships—and also to advance the quality and comprehensiveness of future research that builds upon extant literature. The scoping review is, itself, a contribution to the field.

Therefore, this is not a literature review in which we attempt to synthesize the lessons learned across a selection of articles as the foundation upon which to build an investigation or inquiry; we present a scoping review in which we comprehensively curate and describe key characteristics of articles in which the authors share information or reflection about community–academic partnerships in ways that might help others to understand how, why, or toward what ends community and academic partners engage with each other. The presentation of this scoping review follows the standard PRISMA format. Because our dual purposes of this article are to advance the understanding of how scoping reviews are conducted and to actually conduct a scoping review, we include descriptions of what is expected per the PRISMA–ScR process.

Purpose and Guiding Questions

The purpose of this study was to curate and describe the partnership literature in the community engagement field in order to advance partnership research and practice. Our guiding question was “What is the state of the partnership literature in the field of community engagement?” Our goal was to identify and describe key characteristics of that literature at the article level.

Methodology

A key characteristic of scoping reviews is a thick description of the methods, which aligns with the aim of scoping reviews to be transparent and reproducible. When following best practices, scoping reviews

- are informed by an a priori protocol,
- are systematic and often include exhaustive searching for information,
- aim to be transparent and reproducible,
- include steps to reduce error and increase reliability (such as the inclusion of multiple reviewers), and
- ensure data is extracted and presented in a structured way (Munn et al., 2018).

The methodology for this scoping review was based on the framework outlined by

Arksey and O’Malley (2005) and further refined and updated by Peters et al. (2020) in the *JBIManual for Evidence Synthesis*. Because these two sources come from the health sciences and were focused on health topics, which is true for the majority of scoping reviews (Pham et al., 2014), we also looked to the example of a scoping review of physical education teacher satisfaction provided by Richards et al. (2017). Dr. Michael Hemphill also provided guidance and feedback on our process. This study does not meet criteria for human subjects research, so institutional review board approval was not needed.

Protocol

We developed our protocol through an iterative process wherein the reviewers routinely discussed the goals of the review in order to ensure that we were establishing appropriate and useful criteria for inclusion and exclusion of articles. Figure 1 reflects the process for searching and selecting the works included in this scoping review.

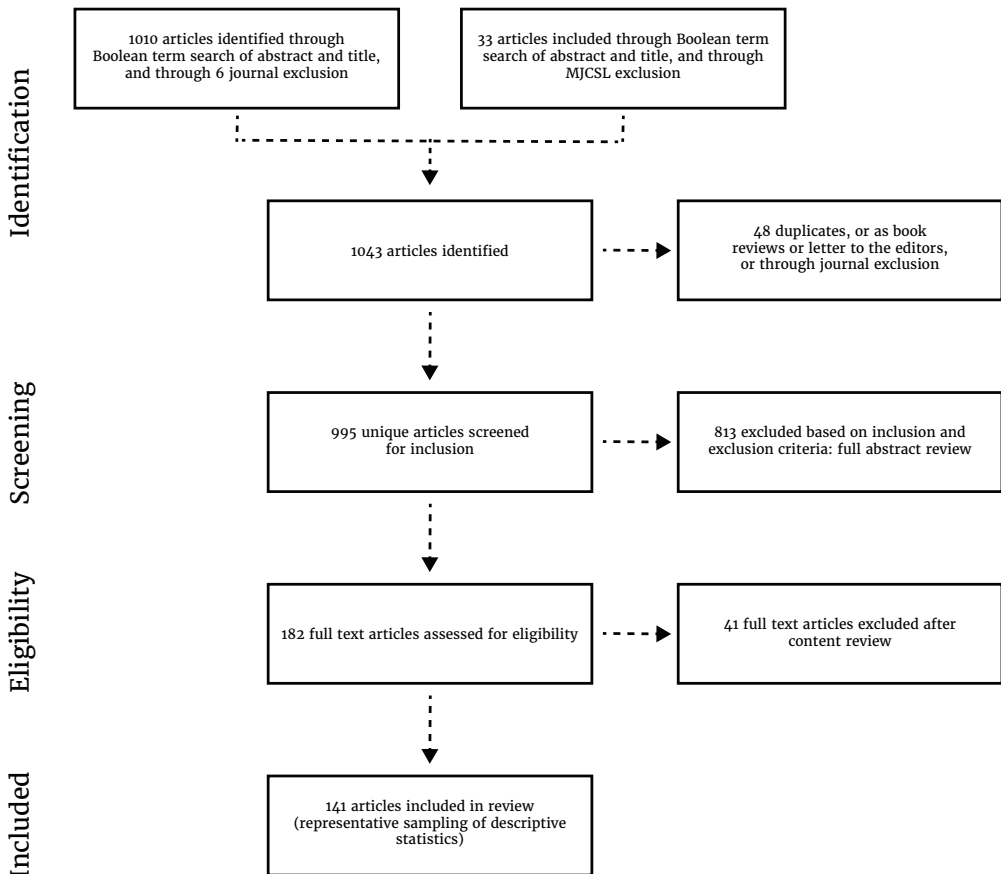


Figure 1. Flowchart of the Review and Data Collection

Identification

We used a three-step search strategy as recommended in all JBI (2015) types of reviews. The first step is an initial limited search of at least four online databases relevant to the topic. Our initial search was conducted in Education Source, ProQuest, Directory of Open Access Journals, and Academic Search Complete.

Though not included in Figure 1, a key takeaway from our pilot process was the importance of narrowing the journals for inclusion, rather than searching more broadly. It is important to balance feasibility with breadth and comprehensiveness of the scoping process, given the volume of articles a search may yield (Levac et al., 2010, pp. 4–8). We ultimately found that it was useful to use two terms—*relationship* and *partnership*—and portions of those terms (e.g., *relat** and *partner**) to identify appropriate articles. Prior to this, we conducted an initial search using the term “partnership” in two databases, which revealed 472,424 articles. We tried again, limiting the keywords to the Boolean terms *partner** and *relat**, which yielded a still massive 7,319 articles. Next, we added the inclusion and exclusion criteria of (a) peer review, (b) no books, and (c) no reports from web searches, which yielded 6,197 articles. Finally, we chose to limit our term search to the title or abstract only, and still, the number was far too large for our team to feasibly sort through. Further, we realized that the terms were too general to be useful for locating the types of partnership studies we were seeking.

Ultimately, we decided to limit our search eligibility to articles in seven journals. Scoping reviews are time and resource intensive because they require researchers, working in teams for intercoder reliability, to read and assess hundreds of abstracts and, later, potentially hundreds of full articles in order to precisely attribute key characteristics. This scoping review, for example, required 995 abstract reviews and 182 full text reviews. This is the first scoping review of its kind in the field and, as such, provides a pilot of sorts. The development of the strategy to curate articles, as well as to characterize and categorize them, undoubtedly will be refined in future iterations. We offer discussion of future considerations further in this article, which may contribute to these refinements.

We sought to include journals that specifically publish on the scholarship of engagement or community-engaged scholarship. These journals were represented at a panel of “leading SLCE [service-learning and community engagement] journals” at the International Conference for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (2019) and in Campus Compact’s *Key Readings on Campus–Community Partnerships* (n.d.). We used the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching’s (n.d.) definition of community engagement: “The collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.” We limited our selection to journals primarily focused on the topic of community engagement in higher education, as stated in their missions. To provide some diversity of journals to help us in this first effort to establish article-level categories and attributes of the partnership literature, we included one journal that is jointly edited and managed by Australian and American scholars, as well as one that focuses on service-learning in the field of engineering. We acknowledge that other journals also publish the scholarship of community engagement as their primary focus, or as one aspect of a broader mission or field, and encourage future scoping reviews to include articles from these journals. Our scoping review included seven journals:

- *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement* (Gateways),
- *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement* (IJRSLCE),
- *International Journal for Service Learning in Engineering* (IJSLE),
- *Journal of Higher Education Outreach & Engagement* (JHEOE),
- *Journal of Community Engagement & Scholarship* (JCES),
- *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (MJCSL), and
- *Partnerships: A Journal of Service Learning & Civic Engagement* (Partnerships).

Limiting to seven journals in the community engagement field served our study well: Ultimately, we were interested in specifically understanding the lessons learned about a certain type of partnership—a community-engaged, community-academic partnership. Researchers of future scoping reviews might choose to widen the number of journals or type of scholarship included; however, it is important to note that scoping review practices have not yet been developed for expressions of knowledge other than peer-reviewed journal articles. Other expressions and modes of knowledge of community engagement partnerships certainly exist in non-peer-reviewed formats as well as in nontextual and nondigitized artifacts.

The second step was to identify the articles within the seven journals. Our search using the root Boolean terms *relat** and *partner** yielded the greatest number of relevant and fewest number of irrelevant articles (we had also tried *relat** OR *partner** to less success and efficiency). We limited the search to the abstracts rather than full text. However, because the search platform used for the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* does not allow one to search abstracts according to our protocol, we used a collated set of abstracts sent by the journal editor (upon request) and searched that document. Our rationale was that if an article is discussing a community-academic partnership, it would be difficult to convey the focus of that topic in the abstract without also using these root terms. In our search, we included all articles written from the start of the publication until May 2020. Searching the seven journals only, we identified 1,043 articles for review. We removed a further 48 articles that were duplicates, book reviews, or letters to the editor, yielding 995 articles for our next step. For additional information about our methods, please contact the lead author.

Screening

The next step was to screen the 995 articles based on a full abstract review. Two reviewers read through all abstracts to determine whether these articles met our criterion: Does this partnership tell us something about community-academic partnerships? Because we were interested in how partnerships work, we were also interested in only those articles that used the partnership as an area of focus or a unit of analysis. The

following questions guided this process: Is there a description of who was involved in the partnership? Is there a description of processes or the results of the partnership work? Based on this manual review of the abstracts, we excluded a further 813 articles.

Eligibility

The final step examined the remaining 182 articles in a full text review. Two authors conducted an initial review of the full text articles and identified 41 that did not meet our initial criteria. There was concordance during this process. Articles that received split decisions or that met only some of the inclusion criteria were discussed to reach consensus with the third reviewer. This process resulted in 141 articles included in this study.

Data Charting

The data extraction process, also referred to as “data charting,” was developed and iteratively refined during the full text reviews of the 182 manuscripts by two reviewers and finalized with the inclusion of a third reviewer. They were informed by the types of information one might need to map the literature with regard to the scope of scholarship and the types of evidence used by scholars, as stated in our purpose. We read articles and charted data along eight categories. The authors discussed any discrepancies until they reached consensus. This procedure helped to clarify and refine the definition and description of the categories and characteristics in the codebook (Table 1).

Data Availability

The dataset for this scoping review (Janke, Flores, & Edwards, 2021) is available via CivicLEADS (Civic Learning, Engagement, and Action Data Sharing). The authors encourage others to use, add to, refine, and cite this dataset to advance scholarship of community engagement partnerships, building upon existing scholarship—and contributing their own open scholarship to the field.

Positionality Statements

Sharing the reviewers’ positionalities in the context of a scoping review helps to situate the reviewers’ perspectives in relation to the aim of the scoping review as well as the parameters and definitions of the categories

Table 1. Codebook

Category	Characteristic	Definition/Description
Source of partnership information	--	Examines whether the ideas about partnerships are presented using a real life and specific example of a partnership, or whether the ideas are independent or separate from any real life and specific partnership identified in the article.
	Actual	The author presents thoughts about partnerships that are based on actual, real life and specific partnerships that are described in the article.
	Idea	The author expresses thoughts about partnerships that are based on ideas, principles, practices, concepts, theories, or other types of abstractions on the topic of partnerships and without presentation of any actual partnership.
Authors' scholarly approach	--	Scholarly approaches used by author(s) to develop the thoughts presented in the article.
	Qualitative	The author collects data (usually nonnumerical) through firsthand experience to address questions about concepts, opinions/perspectives, and experiences. Data are typically gained through interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, participant observation, documents, and artifacts.
	Quantitative	The author collects and analyzes numerical data to quantify a collection and statistically analyze data using a deductive approach to test hypotheses.
	Mixed methods	The research process used in the article included both qualitative and quantitative methods.
	Indigenous or decolonial	The authors (identify as Indigenous and) use approaches that recognize Indigenous communities develop shared ways of knowing guided by how they view the world, themselves, and the connection between the two. Part of Indigenous knowledge, then, is a combination of the reflection of and resistance to colonization in various realms. Those engaging in Indigenous research reflect on who owns, designs, interprets, reports, and ultimately benefits from the research process and products (Smith, 2012).
	Program evaluation	The author presents a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects, policies, and programs, particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency.
	Conceptual	The author presents observations and analysis related to abstract concepts or ideas.
	Project or program description	The author provides a thick description of a project or program and does not describe theoretical or conceptual frameworks, methodology, or research methods.
Author's positionality	--	The author's relationship to the partnership (if actually experienced and specifically identified) presented in the article.
	Direct	One or more of the authors is/are involved in the partnership activity described.
	Indirect	None of the authors are involved in the partnership activity described.
	N/A	The article is written as a thought piece in which no actual partnership is described.

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Table 1 Continued

Category	Characteristic	Definition/Description
Community partner positionality	--	The community partners' voices are represented by their own contributions to the writing of the article, or by direct quotes of their utterances or writings.
	Coauthor	Community partners are listed as an author of the article.
	Direct quotes	Community partners are directly quoted and cited in the article.
	Not evident	Insufficient information was provided to determine how, if at all, community partners' voices were included, either as coauthors or as directly quoted and cited in the article. Articles that summarized community partner voice in the aggregate, but did not provide direct quotes, are included in this category.
Partner organizational type	--	The types of formal and informal groups and organizations partners represent in their partnership work.
	Nonprofit	An organization that is registered as having not-for-profit status.
	Informal organization	A group of people who have common interests who coordinate activities and networks to achieve shared goals.
	Government	A level of governmental organization is present (e.g., city, county government, planning offices).
	Industry/Business	A for-profit entity.
	Faith-based	Organization based on religion or a religious group, or faith-based organizations that are rooted in a particular faith carrying out programs and services related to that faith.
	Health	Organization focused on the topic of health (e.g., AIDS clinic, hospital).
	International	The partner was international based on the perspective of the author. We did not center the United States to determine whether national/international status.
Not evident	Organizational type of the partner could not be determined by the reviewers.	
Benefit to the academic partner	--	The aspect of the higher education institutional mission achieved through the activity of the partnership described in the article.
	Teaching and learning	Curricular and cocurricular experiences for student learning and development (e.g., service-learning classes, student affairs programs).
	Scholarship	Faculty or staff members' disciplinary research, creative activity, or inquiry work.
	Service	Activities that are done on behalf of the institution that provides some contribution to communities, and which might be reported as how the institution serves the community, beyond providing education to enrolled students and scholarship production by its faculty, staff, and students.
	Not evident	Benefit to the academic partner could not be determined by the reviewers.

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Table 1 Continued

Category	Characteristic	Definition/Description
Journals	Gateways	<i>Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement</i>
	IJSLE	<i>International Journal of Service Learning in Engineering</i>
	IJRSLCE	<i>International Journal of Research on Service–Learning and Community Engagement</i>
	JCES	<i>Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship</i>
	JHEOE	<i>Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement</i>
	MJCSL	<i>Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning</i>
	Partnerships	<i>Partnerships: A Journal of Service–Learning and Civic Engagement</i>

developed. Positionality statements are not currently part of the scoping review protocol but a practice inserted by the authors. As we share later, we learned that our different roles and experiences led us to interpret some categories differently. As a result of this discovery, we collectively clarified our parameters and definitions and continued to refine the codebook as a reference tool to ensure we did not drift in our interpretations. The codebook also helps make the analysis transparent and explicit enough to allow others to evaluate and build upon.

Emily Janke is an associate professor in a department of peace and conflict studies and the director of an institute for community and economic engagement located in the division of research and focused on supporting community-engaged scholars and scholarship. She identifies as a white woman, scholar-administrator who uses and contributes to theory, scholarly practice, and administrative strategies to advocate for and support community-engaged scholarship as a valued and rewarded aspect of academic work. Janke serves on the editorial boards and as a reviewer for several of the journals included in this review and is a member of the Carnegie Foundation’s Community Engagement Elective Classification National Advisory Committee.

Santos Flores holds an MA in peace and conflict studies and a PhD in kinesiology. He identifies as queer (“politically and poetically” (Wallace, 2021), Latinx, Black-Indigenous feminist, male, activist academic, community member and advocate, peace and conflict studies scholar, capoeira coach, and educator. He is interested in community and youth development, criti-

cal theory, cultural studies and practices that enhance social justice mindfulness, embodiment, and critical consciousness. His scholarship concentrates on community and youth development, and he leads multiple community-engaged projects that use popular education, critical consciousness, and critical pedagogy.

Kathleen Edwards has been a community partner, educator, staff member, and student within various community engagement projects, so she tries to draw on those differing perspectives in her current work and scholarship. As a white woman who studies social justice issues, she highly values cocreated and participatory approaches to community engagement work. She approaches research from a critical paradigm and is thus concerned with how community–academic partnerships can disrupt or uphold forms of power, privilege, and oppression.

Descriptive Overview of the Articles

The data charting process provides a descriptive summary of the results that aligns with the objectives and questions of the scoping review. Given the goals of transparency and reproducibility, clarity with regard to the methods used to chart the data is paramount. It is recommended that in determining the categories and characteristics used to describe the articles, reviewers use an iterative process. The codebook in Table 1 provides the reader with the definition and description of the data-charting process—the categories and characteristics used to analyze each article included in this scoping review. Table 2 provides the results of our data charting.

Table 2. Categories and Characteristics of Scoping Review Journal Articles

Category	Characteristic	Total	% of all articles	N/X
			(N/141)	= Category Totals
		N	%	%
Date published*	2011–2020	98	70	n/a
	2001–2010	40	28	n/a
	1994–2000	3	2	n/a
Source of partnership information*	Actual	114	81	n/a
	Idea	27	19	n/a
Authors' scholarly approach*	Qualitative	74	52	n/a
	Project/program description	29	21	n/a
	Conceptual	19	13	n/a
	Mixed methods	6	4	n/a
	Indigenous or decolonial	6	4	n/a
	Program Evaluation	4	3	n/a
	Quantitative	3	2	n/a
Author's positionality*	Direct	82	58	n/a
	Indirect	49	35	n/a
	N/A, not evident	10	7	n/a
Community partners' voices	Not evident	87	62	n/a
	Yes: Total	54	38	n/a
	—Direct quotes	34	24	n/a
	—Coauthored	20	14	n/a
Partner organizational type ^a	Nonprofit	70	50	24
	K–12 Education	39	28	13
	Government	34	24	12
	Faith-based	30	21	10
	Informal organization	28	20	10
	Not evident	25	18	9
	Industry/Business	22	16	8
	Health	22	16	8
Benefit to academic partner ^b	Teaching and learning	80	57	42
	Scholarship	49	35	26
	Service	47	33	25
	Not evident	15	11	8

Table continues on next page.

Table 2 Continued

Category	Characteristic	Total	% of all articles (N/141)	N/X = Category Totals
			N	%
Journal*	<i>Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement</i> (1996)	36	26	n/a
	<i>Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship</i> (2008)	28	20	n/a
	<i>Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning</i> (1994)	24	17	n/a
	<i>Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement</i> (2009)	18	13	n/a
	<i>International Journal of Service Learning in Engineering</i> (2006)	15	11	n/a
	<i>International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement</i> (2013)	14	10	n/a
	<i>Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement</i> (2008)	6	4	n/a

Note. Some percentages do not total 100 due to rounding. Any category with an asterisk denotes a single-choice decision regarding that characteristic. Otherwise, multiple characteristics could be applied to the category. ^a Partner Organizational Category total = 290, ^b Benefit to Academic Partner Category total = 191

Although a best practice in scoping reviews is to present the findings without additional explanation, we deviate from that recommendation. Our reasoning for this decision is based on one of the aims of the article—to make the process transparent for purposes of learning new methods. We also include future areas of research for each category.

Time Period

How has the volume of scholarship on community engagement partnership changed since the first journals of the field were published? We categorized articles into three time periods: 1994–2000, 2001–2010, and 2011–2020. We selected 1994 as the start for the first time period because it is when the first journal was published. The percentage has grown significantly across time periods, with just three articles (2%) published in the first five years, 40 articles (28%) published between 2001 and 2010, and 98 articles (70%) published from 2011 through May 2020.

Analysis across these time periods shows that partnerships have gained increased attention. In this way, it appears that scholars *have*, to some extent, responded to calls for increased attention to partnerships. The increase in partnership studies may be, in part, a result of the emergence of new journals. In the first time period (1994–2000), just two of the seven journals in this scoping review had been launched (MJCSL 1994, JHEOE 1996), four had been added by the end of the second time period (IJSLE 2006, Gateways 2008, JCES 2008, Partnerships 2009), and the final one was added in the third time period (IJRSLCE 2013).

Future research might investigate how the partnership literature has changed over time with regard to topics, scholarly approaches, and authorship. For example, how has partnership scholarship increased relative to other topics? In what ways has theoretical grounding or empirical evidence grown over time? Most of the journals have transitioned from early paywalls to access

articles to an open access model. How, if at all, has moving from print to online, and from subscription to open access, corresponded to changes in the number of articles written on the topic within as well as across journals? For example, moving away from print may have allowed some journals to publish more frequent volumes or greater numbers of articles in each.

Source of Partnership Information

Sometimes authors write about a particular partnership; at other times they write about partnerships more abstractly and without reference to any specific one. The large majority of articles (81%) were based on the author's examination of specific partnerships, whereas approximately a fifth (19%) of the articles were written about the topic of partnerships without referencing any particular partnership. Practically speaking, researchers looking for empirical evidence, or ideas grounded in direct observations, need to be able to cull these articles from ones that are based more relatively on abstraction. Future research might use this dataset as a starting point to select articles for a meta-analysis or metareview of findings developed from studies on partnerships.

Authors' Scholarly Approaches

We examined the approaches authors used to develop a scholarly understanding of the topic presented in the article. The overwhelming majority of articles used qualitative research methods (52%), followed by program or project descriptions (21%), and conceptual inquiry approaches (13%). Very few articles presented mixed methods research (4%), Indigenous or decolonial approaches (4%), program evaluation (3%), and quantitative research (2%).

It is important to note that the authors' scholarly approaches are separate and may be different from the scholarly approaches used by participants who may have been the focus of the study. For example, the author may have used a qualitative case study design to examine the partnership facilitating a service-learning course or a course-based undergraduate research project. So, while the scholarly approach of the faculty member may have been a mixed methods research project, the authors of the article used a qualitative approach in their study of that undergraduate research project.

Although it is best practice for scoping reviews to choose categories that are mutually exclusive (i.e., a study can be coded into only one category), we found that, with regard to scholarly approaches, this was difficult to do in many cases. As we discuss later, the development of this category was challenging given (a) inconsistent definitions of the approaches among scholars generally and (b) the imprecise and sometimes entirely absent discussion of methodological approaches offered by authors. Ultimately, the development of the categories, and the assignment of the articles to the categories in particular, often felt like a subjective effort as we looked for and interpreted methods and strategies based on textual clues rather than explicit statements regarding approach. When authors did name their approach to the research (e.g., "This is a case study about . . ."), we respected that naming even if it did not fit with accepted research definitions. Ultimately, through an iterative process of reading articles and reviewing and revising the characteristics and the descriptions of the characteristics, we selected the seven categories to describe the scholarly approaches used by the authors of the articles included in this review.

Given the challenges of studying partnerships due to the varied nature of the partners, their activities, their purposes, the contexts in which they work, and whether the relationships occurred at an interpersonal or interinstitutional level (Janke, 2012), it is helpful to scan articles to understand the research approaches used so others may build upon and refine these approaches for their own studies. Categorizing by scholarly approaches allows one to map the ways that the authors approached their exploration of partnerships, which is helpful for understanding the types of "evidence" (e.g., qualitative, quantitative) brought to bear on the topic. What, if any, research questions were asked, what methodologies and methods were used, how did the scholar decide who to include in their interviews, what artifacts were used, and what compromises were made, given the challenges? Future research might examine the ways that scholarly approaches tend to align to certain disciplines, partnerships, or expected outcomes for the community engagement activity. Future scoping reviews might chart the methods used within each of the approaches.

Authors' Positionality Relative to the Partnership

In articles in which the author described an actual partnership, we sought to understand the relationship of the authors to that partnership. We asked: To what extent does the literature represent perspectives of those on the “inside” relative to those “outside” the partnership? Over half (58%) of the articles were authored by members of the partnerships; that is, the author appeared to play a partner role in the community–academic partnership described in the article. Approximately one third of the articles (35%) were authored by scholars not involved in the partnership. In some instances (7%), it was not possible to determine the authors' positionality, or the article was written as a thought piece in which no actual partnership was described.

The relationship of an author to their area or focus of study can be framed either as an asset or a limitation depending on a reader's own research paradigm (Glesne, 2016). Having insider status and knowledge may be advantageous in that it allows for access, perspectives, and insights that might not otherwise be available. In Indigenous or decolonial approaches, it is, indeed, an essential requirement, as knowledge is generated and stewarded by and through the relationships of the people holding and sharing the knowledge (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012). In some views and instances, however, relational closeness can be viewed as a limitation. How does the author's positionality affect what they see and how they view and experience the partnership? What is the level of comfort and trust toward the author by the partners or participants involved in the study? Might they elect to not disclose ideas or issues for the sake of the relationship (or lack thereof) with the author? Depending on the scholarly approach and topic, positionality may matter a great deal. Future research might examine how, if at all, the authors' positionality relative to the partnership corresponds with types of scholarly approaches used, the topics pursued, or the outcomes assessed.

Presence of Community Partners' Voices in the Text

Initial coding revealed different ways that the ideas of community partners (i.e., individuals who are actively contributing to the partnership work, but who do this work outside academic positions) were included

in the article. Through an iterative process among the three reviewers, we examined the presence of community partners' voices as represented by their coauthorship of the article, or by direct quotes of their spoken words or writings. The presence of community voice, either via coauthorship or direct quotes, was not evident in approximately 62% of the articles. Approximately 14% of the articles had community partners as coauthors (which may or may not have also included direct quotes from them or other community partners), and 24% of the articles included direct quotes of community partners (and no coauthorship).

Knowing whether an article includes community partner coauthorship can, for example, be helpful for research that seeks to understand the contributions of community partner writing to academic literature. Knowing the extent to which manuscripts include the expressed words of community partners is helpful for those who wish to, for example, use discourse analysis to examine the ways in which community partners express their experiences. Scholars working in community–academic writing teams might review coauthored articles for ideas on how to frame their own research and scholarly writing. Future action research might explore barriers to community coauthorship; investigate rationales for what we term “lack of community presence” in community engagement literature; and advocate for pathways for voices and authorship by those actively contributing to the partnership work, but who perform this work outside academic positions.

Community Partner Organizational Type

Faculty, staff, and students may partner with individuals who represent different types of formal and informal organizations. Organizations have different organizational missions, structures, and cultures that meaningfully affect how their members perform their work. Navigating a partnership with a K–12 school versus an informal community group, for example, can yield significant differences in terms of the partner's expectations for how (e.g., policies), where (e.g., multi- or specific-use spaces and resources), and when (e.g., school day, evening, weekends) to work together. When examining the structures, processes, and findings related to community–academic partnerships, it is important to understand this organizational context.

This scoping review shows the range of community partners' organizational settings. We assigned all organizational types mentioned in an article (see the Appendix for actual counts) and found that across all articles, nonprofits were the most represented type (found in 50% of all articles and 24% of all partner organizational types recorded). Approximately a quarter to a fifth of the articles involved K–12 schools, government, faith-based, informal organization, and businesses/industry. The fewest articles included international and health-care organizations. Notably, reviewers were unable to assign an organizational type to 25 of the 141 articles (18%) due to lack of specific partnership information provided by the authors. Future research and analyses might explore differences within and among partnerships based on the organizational type of the community partners, or why some organizational types are more represented than others.

Benefit to the Academic Partner

Whether the academic partner is collaborating as a function of their teaching, research, or service roles likely shapes key aspects of their collaborative work, such as their purposes, processes, timelines, and resources, among others. From the perspective of the academic partner, we coded for what aspects of the institutional mission appear to be achieved through the activity of the partnership. The majority of articles (57%) described partnerships in which academic partners were engaging students through a course (teaching and learning), and over a third (33%) appeared to be offering service not connected to teaching or research. Approximately a third (35%) of articles involved the academic partner's research or scholarship activity. Not enough information was evident in approximately 11% of the articles to determine the role of the academic partner in the partnership. Future research might explore the broad range of benefits to the community partner, the methods the university uses to engage in pedagogy and learning, and institutional motivations for service and scholarship.

Analysis: A Discussion of Findings and Process

For many scoping reviews, simple frequency counts of concepts, populations, characteristics, or other fields of data will be all that is required (JBI, 2015). As Peters

et al. (2020) noted, "Qualitative content analysis in scoping reviews is generally descriptive in nature and reviewers should not undertake thematic analysis/synthesis" (11.2.8). Thematic analysis may be taken up separately, often guided by a research question, such as "How does the publication record vary according to the journal?" or "In what ways, if at all, are articles that are coauthored by community partners more likely to describe community perspectives of the partnership than those authored by academic partners alone?" Or, even more broadly, "How have research questions and methodologies evolved since the beginning of the publication record in the community engagement field?" However, such analysis of the within-article content is beyond the scope of a scoping review, including this one. The contribution provided by this scoping review is the curation of the broad field of evidence (i.e., the partnership article dataset) and the identification and description of key characteristics of that literature at the article level.

At the same time, there are good reasons to incorporate some analysis in this article, especially related to our experiences of conducting the scoping review. Since scoping reviews represent a methodology new to community engagement, analyzing our process may offer lessons to scholars who will consider this method in their future work, including, we hope, expansion and refinement of this scoping review. In this section we analyze our experience in conducting a scoping review of the community engagement literature, which is, in many ways, quite different from the literature found in the health professions out of which the scoping review protocols have been developed and refined. We discuss the challenges in conducting this scoping review, as well as the opportunities we see for scoping reviews in the community engagement field.

Principles and Values as Core Aspects of Community Engagement Literature

We intended to develop understanding about particular types of community-academic partnerships, ones that would meet the criteria for community engagement, as defined by scholars in the community engagement field. Demarcating community engagement partnerships, as defined by the Carnegie Foundation, from other forms of place-based or community-academic partnerships, such as internships, clinicals, teacher placements, and outreach and

extension relationships, is critical to the further development and future maturation of the community engagement field. To the extent possible, we hoped to limit our review to those relationships meeting the definition of community engagement according to the Carnegie Foundation. This definition is similar to other definitions that describe community engagement not only by who (communities and academic partners), but also according to process (reciprocity) and outcome (mutual benefit; see Saltmarsh et al., 2009). This finding is also evident in the scoping review of conceptions of community engagement conducted by Beaulieu et al. (2018).

However, how does one determine accurately and with confidence that the article they choose to include in their scoping review meets the criteria of a community engagement partnership as defined by the community engagement field? Many institutions and journals use a variety of terms to describe partnerships that might be considered for inclusion. For example, scholars in physical education refer to partnerships that meet our established criteria as “service-bonded inquiry” (Martinek et al., 2012), and other fields use terms such as public scholarship (Colbeck & Wharton-Michael, 2006). One might look beyond the term to identify criteria for identifying articles. According to the Carnegie definition used here, one could look for indicators of reciprocity and mutual benefit among community and academic partners (Janke, Shelton, et al., 2019). However, given the limited information often provided about the process and outcomes of partnerships (let alone the partners themselves!), this does not seem a feasible approach. Further, is it possible—or even appropriate—for a researcher who has no direct knowledge of the partnership to make this determination based on the contents of the written word? How do you make this determination if the process or outcomes are not clearly stated?

In an effort to manage the unwieldy and fraught task of determining whether a single article met this criterion for inclusion (i.e., *community-engaged* community-academic partnerships), we chose to screen articles based on the publication (i.e., journal) rather than to establish criteria at the article level. This decision placed a limitation on our scoping review. As community engagement becomes more accepted as a research methodology or pedagogy, more community

engagement articles are likely to be published in disciplinary journals. In fact, we note in the *Campus Compact Key Readings on Campus–Community Partnerships* the inclusion of articles published in journals outside the community engagement field. A strategy to conduct a scoping review of community-engaged community-academic partnership across disciplines remains to be developed.

Variability of Scholarly Approaches and Presentation of Works

Per scoping review protocol, we followed an a priori process in which we identified our guiding question and established a protocol for identifying articles. However, the process for establishing, refining, and finalizing categories and codes was deeply iterative and extended throughout the study. The continuously iterative process was necessary, in part, because of the nuances of the concepts related to community-engaged community-academic partnerships but also because few common conventions exist that enable authors to describe the who, what, where, when, why, and how of community engagement partnerships. Who was involved in the partnership and what were their roles? What groups or organizations were partners acting on behalf of? Where are partnerships occurring and what are the institutional affiliations of the authors? Why or through what work role is the academic partner representing their organization—teaching, research, and/or service? How is the author related to the partnership being described?

Because we were interested in understanding the scope of evidence in the field that has been brought to bear in the literature as it relates to community-academic partnerships, we tried to track the methodology and methods used by the authors of the articles. This proved to be much more challenging than anticipated. The first challenge was that numerous articles did not present a methods section or did not clearly state the methodology guiding the research. Although some articles briefly identified their method—case study, for example—this naming was more colloquial and less about reflecting a trustworthy expression of true case study methods. This finding was reinforced by the absence of a conceptual or theoretical framework in those articles.

In reviewing these articles with no methodological or theoretical discussion, we came

to conclude that we needed to differentiate among subsets of articles: (a) those that describe programs but are not considered to be research (project description), (b) those that ask research questions addressed using qualitative methods (qualitative research), and (c) those that conceptually explore a topic or put forth an argument using existing literature, rather than the author's own analysis of a partnership (conceptual scholarship).

It was not always easy to establish which articles used qualitative research approaches, given the varying and limited descriptions of methodologies and methods used. We used various indicators to make judgments, such as whether an author used certain methods or terms typically reflective of a scholarly approach. For example, qualitative scholarship was judged on the presence of references to a research question, theoretical or conceptual framework, the use of the term "case study," or qualitative methods such as observations, interviews, and document or textual analysis.

A notable subset of the articles was primarily descriptive: The authors intended to share their experience of partnering and sometimes shared lessons learned based on their reflections on their experiences, but they did not attempt to develop generalizable knowledge that could be extended to other partnerships as is the purpose of other forms of research. We labeled these program descriptions.

Ultimately, we felt uneasy about the final decisions made about the characterizations of many articles due to the lack of evidence to support our judgments. In these cases, in which we were very uncertain, we created and used categories that suggested not enough evidence was available, recognizing that a lack of evidence in the written word does not imply its absence in the actual partnership.

Through an iterative process of reviewing the articles and revisiting our guiding question, we modified the labels of our categories and characteristics to best reflect our analyses. For example, we changed the category label from *methodology* to *scholarly approaches* to more accurately recognize the diverse approaches describing and examining partnerships—some of which constituted research, many of which did not. We settled on these final categories: qualitative research, quantitative research, mixed

methods research, Indigenous or decolonial scholarship, program evaluation, project description, and conceptual scholarship/inquiry.

Positionality

The positionality of each reviewer became evident in the assumptions we made in both the development of the categories and the characteristics developed. For example, in the first iteration, the first author created the category "type of activity through which the partners are interacting: research, teaching, creative activity, or service." Her scholarship on promotion and tenure and institutional change from a higher education perspective had grounded the idea that the important thing to map was the type of *academic* role through which the *academic* partners were engaged. The second and third authors, having their own community perspectives from their roles as community partners currently or previously, questioned the name and description of the category. They offered that this perspective was slanted entirely toward the role of the academic partners (what "hat" does the academic faculty or staff member wear in the partnership?) but did not include the community partners. We decided to rename the category "benefit to the academic partner" to more accurately name what we were actually mapping in this category. That is, there were no characteristics within the category that described the role through which the community partner was engaged, such as through running programs, services, coordinating volunteers, or some other role.

Other instances in which we observed our positions and/or frames were that we did not include categories for institutional types of the higher education partner, such as whether they represented a public or private institution, were 2- or 4-year institutions, or were located in an urban or rural environment, to name a few. We did not seek to describe the position or rank of the academic partners, and we did not track student roles or engagement, such as coauthors, other than noting whether partnerships were connected to partners' teaching roles. Scholars embedded in land-grant institutions and in outreach and extension offices, or those with economic engagement and community development, or in student affairs units, would have brought their own lenses with regard to what aspects of the partnership literature were most important

to collect.

Positionality is present in any and all scholarship—who we are frames what we look for, what we see, and how we see things. In a number of articles included in this scoping review, it was difficult to determine the presence of community voice, or the relationship of the author to the partnership being described. Clear positionality statements would remedy this omission.

Setting Parameters

We made choices about the sources and types of scholarly products to include in this scoping review based on the goals of the review, and also necessarily shaped by feasibility and capacity of the researchers. Our goal, broadly, was to gain a sense of the community–academic partnership landscape as it relates to what has been published on the topic. Even broader, our goal was to develop a scoping strategy for community engagement literature as a contribution to the field, given that it is among the first of its kind (see also Beaulieu et al., 2018).

This scoping review maps articles from seven journals that were available in English, accessible online, and included in lists of community engagement journals commonly listed or hosted by community engagement associations in the United States. *Gateways* was the only journal that purposefully features studies authored by scholars outside the United States and primarily in Australia (many of the editors and associate editors are from Australian universities, though the journal is hosted in the United States). With only a few exceptions, the articles that include international partnerships depict the perspectives of U.S.-affiliated faculty, staff, and students traveling abroad to work with partners from other countries. In this way, the map we provide is situated within the U.S. perspective of academic partners either partnering with communities also in the United States, or with partners from other countries. There are only a few studies in which the academic partners are from outside the United States working with partners who are also outside the United States, such as in their home country. We would also like to see the inclusion of additional journals that likely have much to offer by way of community engagement partnerships (e.g., *Public, Metropolitan Universities Journal*, *eJournal of Public Affairs*, and *Journal of Community*

Engagement and Higher Education) and which were not included due to the extensive time and resources required for this level of scoping review.

Summary

Scoping reviews are relatively new approaches to mapping the existing literature in a field of interest in terms of the volume, nature, and characteristics of the primary research (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Scoping reviews are different from other types of reviews, such as more commonly used literature reviews and systematic analyses. Their aim and purpose is to map the body of work available on a topic in a field, whereas a literature review selectively presents the scholarship most relevant to a research question, and a systematic review attempts to distill from extant literature the best available research on a specific question. In this sense, scoping reviews stand alone as important contributions to the field, as well as provide a robust foundation for future research and inquiry.

The information brought to light via a scoping review can be quite evocative even though it is the product of a prescriptive process. The review process wherein researchers identify and map key characteristics of the literature serves as a catalyst to see new ideas and spark new questions. So although analysis of content is limited in a scoping review, it serves as an invitation to imagine new research questions. Ultimately, this scoping review provides not only a view of the scholarly literature on community–academic partnerships, but also important insights and directions for future scoping studies within the field of community engagement.

Sharing existing datasets, such as the compendium of articles that have been identified, catalogued, and categorized according to meaningful attributes (e.g., partner type, activity, voice), can lower the barrier for future scholars who wish to conduct a comprehensive literature review for their research on a particular subtopic within the community–academic partnership literature (e.g., conflict management). A compendium is also invaluable to scholars who do not have access to journals behind paywalls. A scoping review, performed in advance of a systematic review, provides authors with a map of the literature landscape, which allows them to refine their selection of articles for inclusion in their own study. Once

the articles have been fully curated, sorted, and described according to key characteristics, researchers can choose among them to determine relevant articles. Enabling this type of access to article topics is a key contribution of this work.

This scoping review of the community–academic partnership in the community engagement literature is the first of its kind. It provides a transparent description of the methods used to conduct a scoping review as well as key descriptive statistics mapping the breadth and depth of the field along key categories. We identified eight mapping categories, creating a codebook,

data displays that show how each article was mapped, and a full reference list of articles included in our scoping review. In reviewing the articles, the team identified many challenges in accurately assessing key characteristics of the scholarship, such as the scholarly approach or methodology the authors were using to study partnerships, as well as the organizational type of the community partners. We believe that this scoping review can serve as encouragement, instruction, and a potential source of data for future scoping reviews and other forms of research.



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Data Availability

Access to the data is available at Harvard Dataverse (Janke, Flores, & Edwards, 2021).

About the Authors

Emily Janke is an associate professor in the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies and director of the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Santos Flores is a doctoral graduate of the Department of Kinesiology and a former student scholar in the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Kathleen Edwards is a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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Note: We include only sources cited in our article, not the articles scoped per Peters et al., 2020.

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